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High School Sports Report

Our Goal: Recognizing The Achievements Of Young Athletes

XXXVIX No. 6 - January 30, 2026

(843) 553-0264

72 Pages

Wilson's 5-Star Leonard is coveted by both Clemson and South Carolina

By Billy G. Baker
Publisher

Moncks Corner—This is a lean year for the Clemson and South Carolina basketball programs to offer any 2026 girl's or boys' basketball players from within the state, but next year there will be a major in-state battle for the services of Wilson stand-out **Josh Leonard** (6-7,200).

Once again, before we go any further, we always pause to thank the fine folks at **Modern Turf** in Irmo and Rembert, especially **Mark Grainger**, for their sponsorship of this recruiting page.

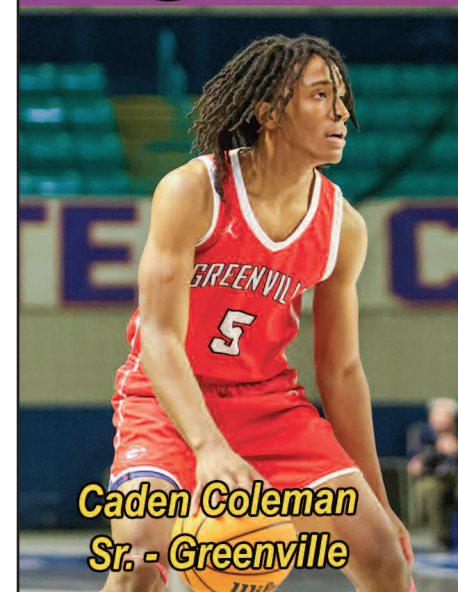
Leonard was named the South Carolina Gatorade Player of the Year following his junior season a year ago. Currently he is averaging 20.9 points, 11.7 rebounds, 3.1 steals, and 2.6 assists a game.

At 6-7, Leonard is a combo guard. He moves up and down a basketball court like a Gazelle on the African flat-lands. He can drain a three, or make a move to the basket and dunk over you. He is the best basketball player in South Carolina since **Zion Williamson** displayed his awesome wind mill dunks at the **Spartanburg Day School** a decade ago.

To date, Leonard, a solid five- star prospect, has 9 offers. **South Carolina** and **Clemson** and **Central Florida** were the first three schools to offer. He has visited the Gamecock basketball games on several occasions over the past two

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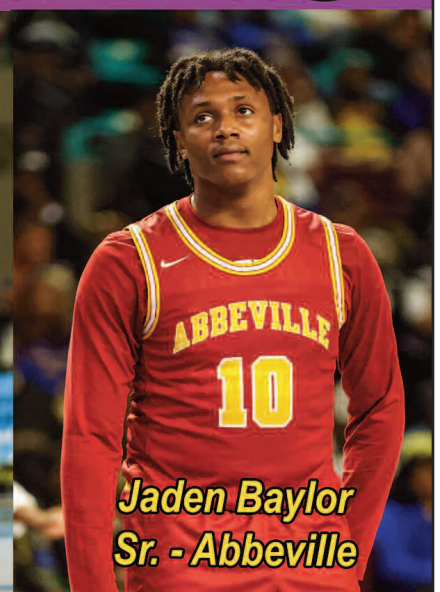
TODAY'S STARS



Caden Coleman
Sr. - Greenville



Celena Grant
Sr - North Augusta



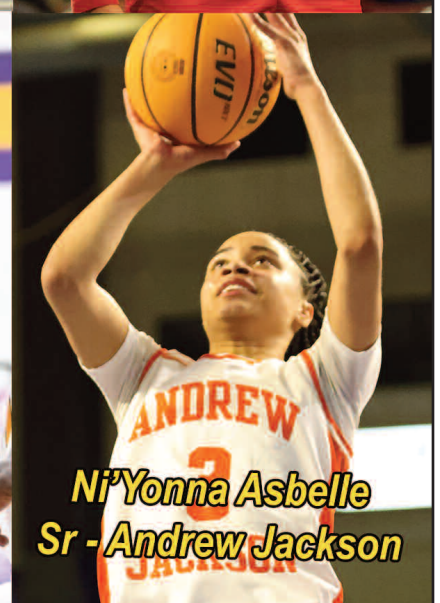
Jaden Baylor
Sr. - Abbeville



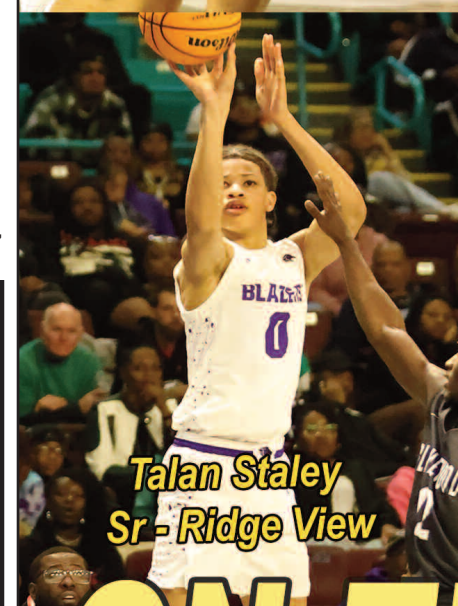
Danielle Oliver
Sr. - Greenwood



Josh Leonard
Jr - Wilson



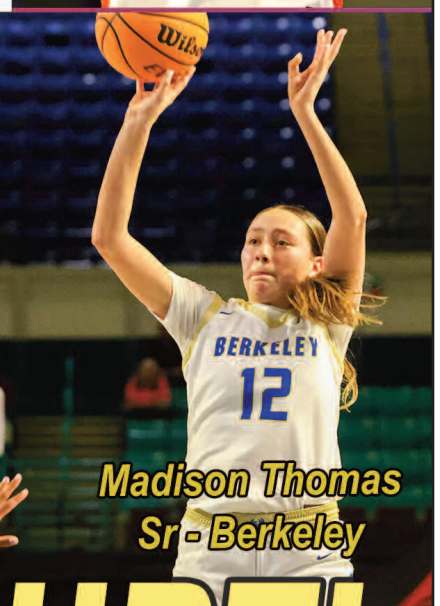
Ni'Yonna Asbelle
Sr - Andrew Jackson



Talan Staley
Sr - Ridge View



Kais Paris
Jr. - Pinewood Prep



Madison Thomas
Sr - Berkeley

ON THE COURT!

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



Sharing some thoughts as the HSSR begins its 40th year covering prep sports in South Carolina

Moncks Corner—With each new year, I thank God for all his many blessings bestowed upon myself, my family, and for allowing me to live through the 25,000 sunsets that he promised when he professed in his word that 70 years would be a typical life span for his followers.

My three children are named **Ashton, Allyson, and Allen** and I have always called them my “AAA Team.” They, and my five grandchildren; **Connor, Caroline, Gracyn, Skylar** and **Liam**, are my heart and soul. I pray to God for their well-being and safety each and every day.

Every day when I get in my car, with the challenge of being the only journalist ever in the United State to produce, and sustain a statewide prep newspaper focused on the positive accomplishments of the 75,000 plus varsity athletes at over 260 public and private schools in our state, I ask God to lead me where I need to go. For the record, I begin my 40th year as the Publisher and Founder of “*The High School Sports Report*” and our companion web site hssr.com.

I always pray for safety on the highways, but that did not stop three deer from hitting my car in recent years, with two of those collisions resulting in totaled cars! After describing to the 911 dispatcher that a huge 12-point buck flew over the hood of the car on a back road near Manning it was just a

few minutes before two highway patrol cars can towards me with their blue lights on.

Were they coming to my aid with my car moving slowly at 10 mph, with the taillights knocked out. Heck no. They were looking for the deer in hopes of having some future meals or putting a 12-point rack on the wall over the mantle. When I did make it to the Travel Center at Exit 119 off I-95 there was a highway patrol man waiting for me. He told me he heard me talking to the dispatcher.

He also told me that he was a former *HSSR Class A Baseball Player of the Year* from **East Clarendon High** and that he stopped by to help me, or to take me anywhere I needed to go. I had no idea that the highway patrol monitored 911 calls like the one I had placed.

The years seem to go by much faster the older I become. At 71, I still enjoy attending high school sports events, and I honestly can’t think of any school in the state that I have not visited at least one time. The travel is starting to wear me down some, but once I get to my destination I am focused on what I need to do.

I wish to remind student athletes that playing on athletic teams; the goal is not to always win, but to always do your best and to be coachable. You should always be a good and supportive teammate to others on

your team. While it is great to compete and win championships, it is also important to learn the life lessons of hard work, goal setting, and teamwork.

One day you will hang up the uniform for good, and your life will go on. Having been a good teammate, you are also likely to be a good employee for an organization. It is always important to note on any job application that you were on a team in high school. If you put down that you were “Team MVP,” or All-Region or All-State, it is even more noted by the person interviewing you.

In just over a month, we will crown basketball and wrestling team champions. Will it be you that makes the three-point shot at the buzzer to win the game at the Colonial Life Center with 5,000 people cheering you on? Will your slam dunk take the lead in a close championship game be a lasting positive memory for you!

Have fun participating on athletic teams. Be the best version of yourself each time you engage in athletic competition!

One day, you will be 71 years old like I am. I pray that you will have few regrets. Your memories can never be taken from you so why not make as many positive memories as you can.

Have a wonderful and successful Happy New Year in 2026!

Williamsburg, continued from pg. 58

played for four years. When Boyd made the decision to leave for the football head coaching job at **Lamar High School**, Morris became the varsity head coach.

“I’m feeling great about being back in the swing of baseball,” Morris said. After playing for four years, it’s a lot different being on the other side of the lines, but I feel like I’ve got a lot to bring to the table. Being a first-time head coach, I know there’s not a lot of expectation on us, but we aren’t expecting for the standard to dip for where Coach Tyler had it.

Florence Christian, continued from pg. 23

runner-up **Pee Dee Academy** and Class A state champion **Williamsburg Academy**). Our young people battled and competed 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 **An-**

Andrew Jackson, continued from pg. 29

since the start of the season.”

Davis is averaging 9.4 points and 10.6 rebounds a game along with 1.2 steals.

While senior guard **Landon Godina** (5.1 pts & 2.4 rebounds) was out with an injury 8th grade SG **Will Barnes** came in and played well averaging 2.6 points a game. Godina is expected to be back for the game with JDA.

Junior forward **Eli Mathys** (6-0,170) completes the starting line-up, and he brings energy and effort to the court according to Coach Barnes. Mathys is contributing 3.2 points and 6.9 rebounds a game.

Senior forward **Tanner Chassereau** (5-10, 215) has played quality minutes this season and he has been a force in the paint. “Tanner sets really good

“We want to continue to grow and improve even after losing a few key pieces from last year’s team (which went 19-5). There’s going to be a lot of young guys who have he opportunity to step up as well as some of the veterans who are going to need to step up into a bigger role. Overall, we’ve got guys chomping at the bit to get started, and I’m right there with them.”

Cox takes over for **Pat Wildes**, who decided to retire after 42 years of coaching, the last several coming at Williamsburg. Cox was the junior varsity head coach last season while helping some with the

drew Miller.

Poston, who started in the secondary on defense, 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.

screens down low under the basket,” said Coach Barnes. He is averaging 2.3 points a game.

Other hard-working reserves on the team include junior guard **Dylan Mahoney**, junior SG **Colin Carter**, soph PF **Landon Johnson** along with **Tres Mixson**.

The Warriors five wins came over **Faith Christian, Curtis Baptist, Jefferson Davis, Patrick Henry, and Holly Hill Academy**. Four of their losses have been by five points or less.

Between January 16 and February 6, the Warriors will play 10 games starting on the road at **Holy Trinity** on the 16th. They play at Branchville on the 17th, host JDA on the 20th, and travel to **Bethesda** on the 23rd. They are at the Cross Schools on the and

varsity. She feels that familiarity with the players will help her in her first year in charge of the varsity.

“Normally many new coaches would be feeling nervous, but not me,” Cox said. “I’m feeling excited and confident about this season. I’m ready to get things rolling on the ballfield.

“I got the opportunity to sit back and watch these girls play last year, and this group of girls have heart and fight, and that’s something that you can’t teach players. That’s what makes me excited.”

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 defense and six on offense. One of the returners on offense will be sophomore quarterback **Riley Minton**, the coach’s son.

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 carries.

close out January at **Thomas Heyward** on the 29th and host **Beaufort Academy** on the 30th.

Then on February 3rd, 4th, and 6th they play three straight home games against Holy Trinity, Holly Hill Academy, and Thomas Heuward to close out the regular season.

“I think we can finish the regular season strong and make a quality run in the playoffs,” said Coach Barnes. “We have been very competitive starting the fourth period in most of our games, but for some reason we hve run out of gas in the fourth period, and we need to learn how to finish games.”

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Dillon, continued from pg. 12

High Schools have helped them prepare for the region competition. “We have 8 region games left and the key to our success will be our rebounding and how well we execute our offense,” said Coach Grice. “We are still working on offensive sets.”

The team has two region games left with Marlboro County starting on the 16th. They will also play **Waccamaw, Georgetown, Loris, Aynor**, Waccamaw and they conclude the regular season with an away game at **Georgetown** on February 10.

The team was dealt a set-back when senior point guard, and team leader, **Zamarious “Zay” Robertson** graduated early and enrolled at North Carolina where he has earned a football scholarship after an outstanding career as a Shrine Bowl wide receiver on the football team.

“We did have Zay on the team for a few games at the start of the season and he was such a great example for our younger players with his unselfish play,” said Coach Grice. “He has always passed up shots he could take with passes to his teammates. It would have been great to have had him for the entire season, but we are certainly proud of all his accomplishments as an athlete at Dillon and he will have a great career at **North Carolina** for sure.”

In his five games with the team, Robertson averaged 12.4 points and four rebounds a game.

James Island, continued from pg. 57

said. “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.”

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 the team’s leading scorer at 10.6 points per game while

Marlboro County, continued from pg. 61

and **Madison Blackburn** was the runner-up at 142 pounds. **Kiersten Graham** was second at 157 pounds. **Mary Williams** won the 192-pound title and **Ke’Asia Brown** won the 237-pound title. She is ranked No. 6 in the state.

The boys and girls basketball teams have started region play and both teams are eyeing a berth in the AAA state playoffs this season.

Hartsville, continued from pg. 61

the midway point of region play and both the boys and girls teams have work to do if they hope to earn a berth to the state AAAA playoffs.

The boys team won 11 of their first 13 games in non-region play but lost their first four games in region play. The Red Foxes, however, were very competitive, losing those four games by a total of 19

Porter Gaud, continued from pg. 57

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 Descherer, 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

Andrews, continued from pg. 31

as he averages 5.3 points per game.

Seniors **Lamarcus Duncan** and **AJ Lee** round out the senior class. Lee set the Andrews school career rushing record with over 4500 yards and was

Taking Robertson’s place in the line-up is 6-3 sophomore guard **Jy’Quez Scott** who is averaging 5.1 points and 2.1 rebounds a game. “Scott can actually play several positions from power forward to point guard,” said Coach Grice. “We call **Jy’Quez** our shot in the arm player because he brings a lot of energy to the court.”

To date, the team’s top scorer to date is senior guard **Markis Morrison** who is averaging 10.4 points a game. “Markis is a been there done that type player, who brings a lot of leadership to the court,” said Coach Grice.

Sophomore point guard **Kamari Jacobs** is a first-year starter, up from the junior varsity. Coach Grice calls him the team’s best on-ball defender, and he is also among the most consistent shooters on the team. Jacobs is averaging 7.9 points a game.

Coach Grice said the team does not have one dominant player, but he said junior guard **Jaheim Mceachin** is a 6-2 guard who can also play the three- spot. “Jaheim is the best jumper around,” said Coach Grice. “He is a good all-around player who is learning to be a better passer. Mceachin is averaging 8.8 points and 3.7 rebounds a game.

Zihere McCall is a 6-4 shooting guard who led the team with 18 points in a recent 48-44 win over **Aynor**. “Zihere can stroke the ball, and he is also a

averaging six rebounds per game.

Senior **Owen Alden** averages 8.1 points and 3.0 assists and junior **Melachi Singleton** adds 8.9 points per game. Freshman **Jeremiah Triplin** adds 5.5 points and 7.4 rebounds while senior **Malachi Brooks** is scoring 5.6 points per outing.

“This is the best team I’ve had talent-wise. We just have to put it all together.”

The wrestling team also is looking to repeat as

The boys team was 5-10 overall and 0-2 in region play entering play on Jan. 16. Junior **Will Jeffcoat** is the team’s leading scorer at more than 15 points per game. Junior **LaQuincy Leach** averages nine points per game and junior **Isaiah Whither** is scoring about 10 points per game. The team has only one senior on the roster, **Elijah Green**.

The girls team went 5-6 in the non-region por-

points. That included three-point losses to Darlington and Crestwood.

Kayson Dawson is leading the team in scoring at 18 points per game while **Tristian Spann** adds 12.4 points per game. **Derion Gattison** averages 8.3 points and 5.2 rebounds and **Zaries Huggins** is averaging nearly six points per contest.

players. We need to have guys ready to step in when needed and make sure they understand the system.”

The girls basketball team has a record of 3-14 as of Jan. 15 but that record is a bit deceiving. The Cy-clones have been very competitive with several close losses early on. A total of six losses have come by four points or less, including a one-point loss to Bishop England.

Porter-Gaud competes in a region with state title contenders Northwood and First Baptist.

Members of the team include **Jonnae Lee, Morgan Howell, Ellison Hostetter, Abigail Handler, Caitlin Baden, Zoe Molten, Addie Legette, Julia Gaddy, Mackenzie Sellers, Emily Manuel, Charlotte Speights, and Ella Holzer**.

named to the All Region football team for the third consecutive year.

Jamauri Shaw and **Dayivon McNair** round out the junior class while **Caiden Green, Jachi Grant,**

good rebounder,” said Coach Grice.

The 6th man off the bench is usually 6-3 junior center **Braylon McKay** who is averaging 6.2 rebounds a game. Junior SF **Kylan Manning** also sees early action off the bench, and he is a solid rebounder averaging three rebounds a game. Junior PF **Kelvion Manning** brings a lot of energy to the court, and he has been slowed by a nagging ankle injury.

Junior shooting guard **Sebastian Herrin** and junior power forward **Cayden Ward** are key contributors also with Ward averaging 2.8 rebounds a game. Junior SG **Brandon Lester** is a hard-working reserve also.

Other developing players include junior PG **Nehemiah Wright**, junior PF **Chris Bynum**, and junior SG **Nicyr Casey**.

The teams 9 wins through January 15 include two wins over **Lake View** (58-31, 57-35) to start the season. Other wins came over **Carvers Bay** (63-28), **Marion** (74-58), **St Pauls** (55-48), **Scotland County** (62-60), **East Clarendon** (67-54), **Calhoun County** (64-63), and **Aynor** recently.

The Wildcats lost games to **Latta, Darlington, Purnell Swett, Laurence Manning Academy, and Loris**.

region champions this season. The Trojans have several returners from last season who have competed well through the early stages of the season.

Several wrestlers are currently ranked by SCMAT.com as top performers in AAAAA in their respective weight classes. **Max Johnson** is ranked No.1 at 150 pounds while **Copeland Grooms** is the top-ranked 190-pounder. **Jacob Rasamee** is ranked No. 3 at 144 pounds.

tion of their schedule. Junior **Jordyn Zimmerman** sets the pace offensively, averaging about 10 points and eight rebounds per contest. Junior **Destiny Ford** has been good for six points and six boards per game while sophomore **Iyanna Boatwright** averages about 8.0 points and 4/5 boards per game. Junior **Diamond Swiney** and sophomore **Serenity Bethea** also contribute about six points per contest.

The girls team also lost their first four region games and were 8-9 overall as of Jan. 15. Junior **Nay Gibson** continues to lead offensively, scoring 14.8 points per game. Senior **Sha’Niyah Richardson** adds 7.4 points per game and junior **Chaniyah Thompson** adds about six points per outing.

Wrestling is a new and developing sport at Porter-Gaud and the numbers continue to increase. In recent events, **Gavin Wiltshire** has been wrestling at 120 pounds and **Oscar Haspel** is working at 126 pounds. **Garland Lynn** is wrestling at 132 pounds and **Henry Tierney** competes at 157 pounds. **Antwan Chisolm** has been impressive at 215 pounds, as has **Shamar Brown**. **Elliott Wendell** wrestles at 106 pounds and **Robert Forsythe** is wrestling as a heavyweight. **Scooter Brown** competes at 190 and **Burchill Cutler** is wrestling at 165.

and **Malaki Flagler** make up the sophomore class. **Kadyn Pushia** and **Kyon Bryant** are freshmen who have added to the depth on the Yellowjackets bench.



‘25-’26 Basketball Stat Leaders



Boys Basketball

SCORING			THREE POINTERS			ASSISTS		
CHRISTIAN RIVERA	DENMARK-OLAR	453	BEN REESE	CHESNEE	64	COLT FOWLER	JAMES F. BYRNES	168
OLIVER BARNES	ANDREW JACKSON	421	NOAH DODD	LANDRUM	59	JONATHAN SLAWSON	PINEWOOD PREP	128
TRE GREEN	PINEWOOD PREP	390	JONOVAN WEBB	WESTSIDE	57	COLT LAYTON	CALHOUN ACADEMY	107
COLT FOWLER	JAMES F. BYRNES	388	SUKHI SINGH	JAMES F. BYRNES	50	DREY JACKSON	WREN	95
JERMIER NELSON	FORT MILL	387	JAKE WOOD	HILTON HEAD CHRISTIAN	46	GRAFTON EIFF	PROVIDENCE CLASSICAL	88
J J GRAY	CAROLINA FOREST	365	WADE MARSH	CARDINAL NEWMAN	46	HARRY SKINNER	BLUFFTON	85
THOMAS HESTER	ST. JOHNS CHRISTIAN	358	JAMES EPTING	DANIEL	46	CONNOR MCCRAW	CHESNEE	83
JOSH LEONARD	WILSON	356	COLT FOWLER	JAMES F. BYRNES	45	JEREMIAH HUNTER	SENECA	68
DAKARI WORLEY	MULLINS	353	BRIAN WASHINGTON JR	NORTH CHARLESTON	43	NYJAVIESE DUNCAN	GREENWOOD	67
DEYON FORD	MULLINS	344	MASON WALKER	NORTH MYRTLE BEACH	42	JAHLEEL SANDERS	CANE BAY	67
CLAYTON EVERETT JR	ASHLEY RIDGE	340	CREWS FELDER	CALHOUN ACADEMY	41			
JONOVAN WEBB	WESTSIDE	340	NIGEL MILLER	LORIS	41			
JUSTUS BELL	DUTCH FORK	334	CHRISTIAN BROWN	IRMO	41			
HERMAN SMITH	STRATFORD	334	GRAYDEN HUMPHRIES	CHAPMAN	40			
A J WASHINGTON	FORT MILL	327	A J WASHINGTON	FORT MILL	40			
NICK LINDSAY	CALHOUN ACADEMY	324						
HARRY SKINNER	BLUFFTON	323						
J'SEAN SANDERS	HIGH POINT ACADEMY	321						
ELIJAH BROWN	CHESNEE	316						
MALIK TINSLEY	LANCASTER	313	ZAKARION SIMPSON	LAURENS	225			
NOAH DODD	LANDRUM	311	DAKARAI WORLEY	MULLINS	204			
AYDEN LEITH	CHRISTIAN ACADEMY	304	TRIPP EIDSON	PINEWOOD PREP	202			
KENDRICK JACKSON	LIBERTY	302	HALL SEASE	ANDREW JACKSON ACAD	195			
PEYTON JENNINGS	WHITE KNOLL	302	ELIZUH DAVIS	ANDREW JACKSON ACAD	170			
CHARLES WHITE II	MARION	299	ANDREW WILEY	CAMBRIDGE ACADEMY	166			
KAVONTAY ROSE	RAGIN PREP CHRISTIAN	297	LUCAS WIERSMA	T L HANNA	158			
KAYSON DAWSON	HARTSVILLE	294	MARK CASLARU	CATAWBA RIDGE	149			
SAMUEL ROSS	PENDLETON	293	KOLTON ROGERS	PELION	149			
KAIS PARRIS	PINEWOOD PREP	292	JOSH LEONARD	WILSON	143			
DREY JACKSON	WREN	279	ZEKE CLYBURN	ANDREW JACKSON	139			
ZEKE CLYBURN	ANDREW JACKSON	277	TREYVON SMITH	MID-CAROLINA	138			
TAYLOR GREENE	FLORENCE CHRISTIAN	277	JAYDEN NOWLIN	MARION	133			
AVERY RAVENELL	ORANGEBURG PREP	276	BRICE WIERSMA	T L HANNA	132			
DEE DAVIS	WESTSIDE	272	KAIS PARRIS	PINEWOOD PREP	131			
BRICE WIERSMA	T L HANNA	270	ZEAN DICKS	SILVER BLUFF	129			
ELIJAH MCCLAIN	CHERAW	270	TYQUEZ JENKINS	FORT DORCHESTR	128			
BRAYLEN DAVIS	BATESBURG-LEESVILLE	270	VA'SHON WASHINGTON	HANNAH-PAMPLICO	126			
TAZHIR WEBBER	CENTRAL	270	BRAYDEN HUSBAND	CURTIS BAPTIST	126			
TRADD LAW	ST. JOHNS CHRISTIAN	267	MAX LOCKE	CRESCENT	125			
SUKHI SINGH	JAMES F. BYRNES	262	SAM PELSNIK	BISHOP ENGLAND	125			
			A J WASHINGTON	FORT MILL	124			

SCORING			THREE POINTERS			ASSISTS		
LAILAH SINGLETARY	IRMO	409	CHLOE HUDSON	ROCK HILL	55	KALEIGH LUCAS	SOUTH POINTE	88
CHASE THOMAS	BLYTHEWOOD	348	KYLIE FORTNER	LANDRUM	54	MYLAYJA THOMPSON	CLINTON	85
CHLOE HUDSON	ROCK HILL	339	BRI SMITH	SOCASTEE	45	ABBY LIVINGSTON	IRMO	81
RYAN MAYERS	CROSS SCHOOLS	335	INDIA WILLIAMS	BLYTHEWOOD	41	BRAIDI GOODRICH	LEXINTON	80
HARMONY BOSTICK	SOUTH FLORENCE	319	OPAL MARALIT	BLUE RIDGE	39	MALIAH BIRCH	NORTHWOOD ACADEMY	78
JANYIA CUNNINGHAM	SOUTH POINTE	316	KAMI ROACH	WALHALLA	39	KOURTNEY WOFFORD	GETTYS BROOME	75
MALIAH BIRCH	NORTHWOOD ACADEMY	308	HAILEY BURGESS	WREN	38	SYDNEY HOLLINGS	CROSS SCHOOLS	74
KYLIE FORTNER	LANDRUM	294	COLBIE WOLF	FORT MILL	38			
MADELINE DATES	GOOSE CREEK	291	LAILAH SINGLETARY	IRMO	36			
TREASURE DAVIS	DILLON	291	DANIELLE OLIVER	GREENWOOD	35			
DELANEY CALDWELL	LANDRUM	290	TAYTE CALVERT	CHESNEE	35			
DANIELLE OLIVER	GREENWOOD	281	KIRSTEN FULTON	BLYTHEWOOD	34			
DA'NARIJAH WILLIAMS	MILITARY MAGNET	281	NI'YONNA ASBELLE	ANDREW JACKSON	34	KAILIN GRANT	HUNTER-KINARD-TYLER	94
NI'YONNA ASBELLE	ANDREW JACKSON	279	ELLISON SILVER	JAMES F. BYRNES	34	KAYDIN SULLIVAN	BLUE RIDGE	90
MAKENZIE KINARD	BOILING SPRINGS	275	NYASIA STEVENS	STROM THURMOND	34	ZIMARIKA MOORER	LAKE MARION	89
TYANA PULLMAN	WOODMONT	275	SKYLAR MCCRAY	A C FLORA	33	ANNIE HENDLEY	UPSTATE HOME SCHOOL	84
MORGAN WHITE	DORMAN	263	KALEIGH HOWELL	NORTHSIDE CHRISTIAN	32	MADISON VEREEN	NORTH MYRTLE BEACH	82
HAILEY BURGESS	WREN	263				EMMA ELLIOTT	WEST ASHLEY	81
KALEIGH LUCAS	SOUTH POINTE	261				JENSYN TURNER	WOODRUFF	80
JADA BATES	NORTHWOOD ACADEMY	261				DA'NARIYAH WILLIAMS	MILITARY MAGNET	78
TARAYAH HUMBERT	EASTSIDE	260						
ANEYA BRITT	GRAY COLLEGIATE	259	AMEERAH CONYERS	MANNING	219			
ZIMARIKA MOORER	LAKE MARION	255	TERIANNA RICHARDSON	AYNOR	191			
JORDAN SAMUEL	LOGGUFF-ELGIN	251	STELLA EICHHORN	WARE SHOALS	186			
KAILAN PARKS	NORTH	249	CHARITY WASHINGTON	CRESTWOOD	184	AMEERAH CONYERS	MANNING	85
JANIA HAYWARD	BEAUFORT	247	CHASE THOMAS	BLYTHEWOOD	184	TERIANNA RICHARDSON	AYNOR	63
AZARIA SIMS	SPARTANBURG	246	JANYIA CUNNINGHAM	SOUTH POINTE	173	AVA RUSH	WANDO	50
REAGAN BUFF	LEGACY EARLY COLLEGE	245	SAVANNAH WESTON	TRAVELERS REST	164	MACI BUTLER	CURTIS BAPTIST	49
KAYLEE NELSON	SPARTANBURG	243	DA'NARIYAH WILLIAMS	SENECA	164	TANISHA MYERS	GREEN SEA-FLOYDS	49
BRI SMITH	SOCASTEE	242	ASHTON SOSBY	MILITARY MAGNET	162	MCKINLEY BEARD	ANDREW JACKSON ACAD	48
KHW-NYLAHI MCKINNON	DILLON	239	CHRISTIAN DUNBAR	ROCK HILL	156	DELANEY CALDWELL	LANDRUM	41
INDIA WILLIAMS	BLYTHEWOOD	238	NY'ASIA YOUNG	RIDGE SPRING-MONETTA	156	NY'ASIA YOUNG	RIDGE SPRING-MONETTA	41
OLIVIA ALLEN	BISHOP ENGLAND	238	ANEYA BRITT	GRAY COLLEGIATE	155	ZAKARIA ILCRESE	LEWISVILLE	39
OPAL MARALIT	BLUE RIDGE	236	MIRACLE QUARLES	WHALE BRANCH	154	HAILEY BURGESS	WREN	37
NAYDIA SHAW	KINGSTREE	233	LAILAH SINGLETARY	IRMO	147	JAMARYIA MCMICHAEL	CALHOUN COUNTY	34
LYRIC ROGERS	REAGAN RIVERS	229	REAGAN RIVERS	CHESTERFIELD	146	KYNLI ENGLISH	THORNWELL	34
MARIAH BROWN	WESTWOOD	229	AYONA ALEXANDER	CAMDEN	145	TIANAH HOPPER	GAFFNEY	33
EVIE ADAMS	MILITARY MAGNET	229	NYRI ALLEN	LAURENS	144	LENAYA ROSS	WOODLAND	31
JA'NYCE FLOYD	ST. JOSEPH	228	MAYA KRYSHTALOWYCH	FOX CREEK	142	MALIA HALL	MAULDIN	31
ZARA LEAMON	SENECA	226	ALEXIS MATTRESS	PENDLETON	142	ELISHA HUFFMAN	AYNOR	31
NATHAYA PHOENIX	SCOTTS BRANCH	220	ALIYAH TISDALE	LATTA	141	JAIDA JOHNSON	JAMES F BYRNES	30
TEONNA DRAUGHN	MAULDIN	219	DELANEY CALDWELL	LANDRUM	141	BRAELYNN HARDIN	PICKENS	28
REAGAN RIVERS	BURKE	218	HAILEY BURGESS	WREN	141	SAMI STEPHENSON	CHAPIN	27
	A C FLORA	216	ELISHA HUFFMAN	AYNOR	140	SHANTAVIA HILLIARD	GREEN SEA-FLOYDS	27
	CHESTERFIELD	216	OLIVIA ALLEN	BISHOP ENGLAND	140	NATHAYA PHOENIX	BURKE	26

SCHSL Boys Basketball Feature

A quick review of boys’ basketball in all five classes so far

By Billy G. Baker
Publisher

Moncks Corner—The 2025-26 SCHSL State Basketball Finals for the 12 surviving boy’s teams comprised from Div. I AAAAA, Div. II AAAAA, Class AAAA, Class AAA, Class AA, and Class A will be contested at the Colonial Life Center on the campus of the **University of South Carolina** between March 5 through March 7.

It will be time to watch slam dunks, downtown tre’s, blocked shots and March Madness invading the heads of thousands of prep basketball fans!

The AAAAA Div. I boy’s finals is scheduled for 8 p.m. on Friday March, 6. The Div. II gold medal round is scheduled for 8 p.m. on Thursday March, 6 while the AAAA boy’s final is to be played at USC at 6 p.m. on Saturday March, 7. The AAA boy’s state finals will be played out at 4 p.m. on Friday March, 6 with the AA boy’s finals set for 4 p.m. on Thursday March, 5. The Class A boy’s championships will be at noon on Saturday March, 5.

The Lower State boys’ finals will all be played at the Florence Civic Center on February 27-28. The upper state boy’s finals will be played on agreed neutral sites on February 27-28 also.

Div. I AAAAA Boy’s Preview:

Can **Ridge View** win their third straight boy’s state basketball championship when the gold medal round is contested for Div. I AAAAA at 8 pm in the Colonial Life Arena at USC on Friday March 6?

Their fans certainly will have a short drive to cheer Josh Staley’s team on. Last year the Blazers defeated Blythewood 71-47 to earn their second straight title with **Korie Corbett** pouring in a game-high 23 points and **Yale Davis** contributing 13 points.

After that big win Coach Staley said, “That’s how you prepare,” he said. You prepare to play a



2024-25 Boys AAAAA Div. 1 Basketball Champions - Ridge View Blazers

whole game, and the work you put in comes out in moments like this.”

With Corbett and Davis graduated the new stud on the Ridge View team is **Talon Staley** and the team does not have quite the playmakers around him they had a season ago. Ridge View lost to Div. II foe Westward 64-61 on Jan. 5 and that verified this observation.

So, who are the candidates to take Ridge View’s place in the gold medal round this year? Could it be number two -ranked **Dorman** or third ranked **Dutch Fork**, or even number five **Byrnes**?

Never count out a **Thomas Ryan** coached Dorman (13-5) team. When you have been there and won it all several times you can always figure it out so watch out for the Cavaliers. They are led by senior PF **Will Bush** (4 pts), junior SG **Aaden Bruton-Smith** (12 pts), and junior PG **Jaden Johnson** (12 pts).

Bret Jones is doing an excellent job coaching up Dutch Fork (16-2) and you never know when the Silver Foxes’ football magic might run off on the basketball team. The Foxes are by senior PF **Justis Bell** (21.5 pts), junior PG **Samajae Govan** (16.4 pts) and “**KJ**” **Dupree** (9.3 pts).

Layne Fowler has built a solid program at Byrnes (15-3), and the Rebels must be in the gold medal round conversation. They are led by top jun-ior PG prospect **Colt Fowler** (24.2 pts), senior F

Sukhi Singh (15.5 pts) and junior SF **Fabian McClintontock** (14.7 pts).

From the Lower State, **Cane Bay (17-2)** could play a dark horse role. Head coach **Shawn McK- een** tells the HSSR, “We definitely expect big things from this team.,” he said. We have good tal-ent and we are very deep.”

The Cobras are led by soph SF **Jamel McKin- ney** (11.9 pts), junior G **Jahleel Sanders** (10.6 pts), and senior SF **Amare Merrell** (9.7 pts).

Brad Dobbels is an excellent X an O coach, and his **Ashley Ridge** (16-2) round ballers must be considered contenders also. They are led by senior G **Clayton Everett Jr.** (21.3 pts), senior G **Shayne Pinckney** (10.9 pts) and junior PG **Javion Gath- ers** (9.4 pts).

West Ashley (15-3) is certainly capable of making a charge in the playoffs also under head coach **Tre McLean** They are led by senior PG **Kendall Mack** (15.3 pts), junior F **Jackson Ter- rell** (13.2 pts), and junior SG **Maurice Cannon** (10.8 pts).

HSSR Prediction For Gold Medal Round: Byrnes or Dorman vs. Cane Bay or Ashley Ridge

Div. II AAAAA Preview:
Goose Creek head coach **Blake Hall** spent a lot of time in his huddle talk with his players follow- ing a gut wrenching 81-71 double OT loss in the

Midlands Feature, continued from pg. 36

focusing on is coming out of the gate with more en-ergy this year,” head coach **Emily McElveen-Scha- effe**r said. “Last year a lot of times we were fighting back, we’d get off to a slow start and spend the sec-ond half fighting back. That’s one thing we’ve put the emphasis on this year.”

Check that task off the list of improvements the defending 5A Division I champions have made. In the past five region games the Bengals have outscored opponents 364-154, with victory margins of 33, 40, 46, 50, and 36 points.

“We didn’t want to be a third-quarter team,” McElveen-Schaeffer said. “We want to play all four quarters obviously, but we want to come out of the gate strong and jump on people from the begin-ning.”

Sumter (10-5, 2-2) had no solution for the Ben- gals’ uptempo play. The Gamecocks finally scored double figures in the fourth quarter with a running clock and younger Bengals on the floor.

As she did last year, Chase Thomas leads the team in scoring with 22.2 points per game, with Williams averaging 14.9 points and Fulton averag- ing 10.5 points.

A big factor in the Bengals game is their ability behind the 3-point line. Williams leads the team with 44 3s and a 44.0 percentage behind the arc. Thomas has 32 3s and a 40.0 percentage and Fulton has 35 and shoots 46.7 percent. As a team, Blythe- wood shoots 36.7 percent from 3-point range.

Those are just two of many Midlands teams

Gray Collegiate, continued from pg. 42

meant a lot. All the great battles we had over the past, and not seeing him on the sidelines, that was real weird. (Keenan assistant coach) **Alex (Harper)** is doing a great job filling in for him right now.”

Bethea said that since the seasoning-opening loss to **Ridge View**, the War Eagles have been improv- ing steadily. As the second half of region play be- gins, there’s no better time for that. Gray beat rival **North Augusta** 64-56 Dec. 16, and the team’s road

Beaufort, continued from pg. 46

munale is ranked fifth in AAAA at 120-pounds. **Jaden Proctor** is ranked sixth at 285 pounds and **Jessob Paris** is ranked seventh at 157 pounds.

Carvers Bay, continued from pg. 51

Also, he is a returning All Region selection. Bromell is fourth on the team in scoring at 9.7 ppg. That is almost two points more per night than last season and he pulls down 5.2 ppg.

Rounding out the starting five are two newcom- ers in sophomore **Ethan Morris** and senior **Kendall Moore**. Morris is third in the team in scoring at 10.6 ppg and is also averaging 5.3 boards per game while

White Knoll, continued from pg. 50

With **Dutch Fork** (15-2, 2-0) looking to run the region, White Knoll has an opportunity to find a playoff spot in battling Chapin, Lexington, and River Bluff, all with 1-1 region records going into Friday’s games. The Timberwolves led most of the

Florence Area, continued from pg. 23

clip to go with 4.3 rebounds and 3.1 steals. Murray is the leading rebounder with a 7.3 average to go with 12.1 points and 2.5 steals. She also averages a block per game.

Jordan Nelson is also a major contributor with an 8.3 scoring average and 4.7 rebounds.

SOUTH FLORENCE

Wilson’s Region 5 foe and crosstown rival **South Florence** is also having a lot of success on the hardwood. The Bruins girls are ranked fifth in the *HSSR* poll and are 15-2 overall and 4-1 in region play. The South Florence boys are 11-7 overall and

jockeying for high postseason playoff berths.

In 5A boys action besides Ridge View and West- wood, Region 4’s **Dutch Fork** (16-2, 3-0) is a fa- vorite to win the region, but in spite of a slow region start, Irmo (13-5, 1-2) could provide some competi- tion. **Lexington** (7-12, 1-2) upset **Irmo** 53-40 on the road Jan. 9 and looks to get back into the postseason form it had when it won the 5A state championship in 2024.

Gray Collegiate (14-2, 6-0 Region 4-4A) and **Brookland-Cayce** (13-4, 4-2) once again will battle for the Region 4-4A crown, with **North Augusta** (14-2, 5-1) and **Midland Valley** (14-4, 4-2) strongly in the mix. In Region 3-4A, **Camden** (12-5, 2-2) and **A.C. Flora** (7-8, 3-2) will battle **Lancaster** (8-11, 5-0) and **South Pointe** (10-7, 4-1) for the region crown.

In 3A boys, Region 3 is the only region with Midlands teams. One game into region play **Keenan** (15-5, 1-0) has an early lead, but **Fox Creek** in North Augusta (13-4, 1-0) could give the Raiders some competition.

In 2A boys, Region 2’s **Pelion** (13-2, 0-2) lost 56-51 to **Ninety Six** (9-3, 1-0) in its region opener Jan. 13 and fell 58-46 to **Saluda** (9-5, 1-1) Friday. Region 3’s **Fairfield Central** (7-8, 2-1) is third in the region standings behind **Clinton** (8-8, 2-0) and **Mid-Carolina** (8-8, 2-0).

C.A. Johnson, the only 1A school in the Mid- lands, is 11-7 and 7-0 in Region 2-1A. Junior **Mil- ton McCray** leads the team with a 17.7 scoring

game against the Yellow Jackets Jan. 26 is nearing.

“Ridge View really helped us out. They really humbled us,” Bethea said. “At the same time we’ve played against a lot of great competition and travel- ling to great places. It’s starting to come together. Big Des (power forward **Desmond Harrington**) is figuring it out, our bench is always ready. I’m super excited to go on to North Augusta on the 26th.”

The Gray Collegiate girls (12-4, 5-1) are also

Another key performer is **Cameron Posey** in the 144-pound weight class. Among female wrestlers, **Olesya Mullins** is the top-ranked wrestler at 105

Moore may be the most versatile player on the team as he plays anywhere he is needed.

The Bears have a solid bench led by senior **Jaden Bell**. He is demon on the defensive end of the court and has been named the region 6A Defen- sive Player of the year the past two seasons.

Also returning are seniors **Tyrone Parson** and **Herbie Washington** and they are joined by new-

way at Irmo (13-4, 1-2) Friday night, but the Yellow Jackets won in the final seconds 48-46. While it went down as a loss, the team put out a solid effort that Coach Thomas talked about.

“They are participating hard, they always give a

1-4 in the region.

Freshman **Harmony Bostick** sets the pace for the South Florence girls. She is averaging 21.5 points and just misses out on averaging a double- double with 9.4 rebounds. She’s also averaging 3.1 steals.

Senior **Allyson Watson** leads the way in steals at 4.1 and is averaging 11.9 points to go with 3.2 as- sists and 4.9 rebounds. Junior **Amari Gamble** is the assists leader at 4.4 to go along with a 5.5 scoring average, 6.0 rebounds and 2.9 steals.

Also contributing in a major fashion is junior **Madison Randolph**. She scores at a 7.6 clip and

average, followed by seniors **Aissacc Germany** (15.9 points and 9.2 rebounds) and **Javarious Wyche** (13.2 points). The Hornets whipped 5A Irmo 72-49 at the **MLK Bash** at **C.A. Johnson** Saturday.

In girls basketball, Region 4-5A looks to be a four-way fight for the region title. **Irmo** (14-4, 3-0) and **Lexington** (14-3, 2-1) are atop the standings, but **Dutch Fork** (10-5, 2-1) and **River Bluff** (9-8, 1-2) are not far behind. In Region 5-5A, Ridge View (10-5, 5-0) played host to Blythewood Tuesday in a game that may provide insight to how the standings will develop in the coming weeks. **Westwood** (11-8, 2-3), which played for the 4A state championship in 2023, is a young team with a lot of promise that may show up in later games.

In Region 3-4A, **A.C. Flora** (10-6, 4-1) and **Camden** (15-1, 3-1) will battle for second place if **South Pointe** (16-2, 5-0) remains in first place. In Region 4-4A, **Gray Collegiate** (12-4, 5-1) is in sec- ond place behind defending 4A champion **North Augusta** (15-1, 6-0). In Region 5-4A, **Lower Rich- land** (12-5, 4-2) is in second place behind **Darling- ton** (15-3, 5-0).

One game into the Region 4-3A schedule has **Keenan** (8-6, 1-0) in the lead following a 61-12 drubbing of **Swansea** Jan. 13.

With a 45-36 Region 2-2A-opening victory over **Strom Thurmond**, **Batesburg-Leesville** (4-7, 1-1) is, oddly enough, one game behind **Ninety Six** (15-1, 2-0) in the standings. The Panthers fell 49-44 to the Wildcats Friday night.

having a strong year in and out of Region 4. Since falling 51-37 to North Augusta Dec. 16, the War Ea- gles have won five straight region games, all of them by 35 points or more.

Junior guard-forward **Aneya Britt** leads the team in scoring with a 19.6 points-per-game average and 11.1 rebounds per game. Junior **Kiley Freeman** averages 10.5 points.

pounds.

comers to the Bears roster in junior center **Xavier Fredrick** and sophomore guard **Kamaris Brown**.

“I would hope that we can continue our success in region and make the playoffs; however, this is truly up to the commitment that our boys put into the season. We can’t become complacent on past success and have to keep our eyes on the present,” said coach Mezz.

good effort, and you’ve got to bring that,” Thomas said. “Where we are is not bad, but we’ve got to take care of business the rest of the way to compete in the playoffs.”

pulls down 3.5 boards.

The South Florence boys are struggling in a bru- tal region that has three other teams besides Wilson ranked in the top 10. They are **Crestwood** at No. 3, **Darlington** at No. 6 and **Hartsville** at No. 10.

Senior **Zyon Johnson** was leading the Bruins in scoring, assists and steals. He was averaging 16.8 points, 2.7 assists and 2.3 steals.

Junior Adrian Singletary was averaging a dou- ble-double of 12.1 points and 10.9 rebounds. Also contributing significantly was sophomore **Davey Green** with 5.4 points and 6.2 rebounds and senior **Rashaan Coleman** with 5.0 points and 5.3 re- bounds

SCBCA Elite Players (All Classes)

Josh Leonard, Wilson
BJ Brown, Sumter
Colt Fowler, Byrnes
Levi Ball, Gray
Caden Coleman, Greenville

SCBCA AAAAA Div. 1 Top Seniors

Justus Bell, Dutch Fork
Clayton Everett Jr, Ashley Ridge
Isaiah Atkins, Boiling Springs
Talan Staley, Ridge View
Nathan Wilbourne, Mauldin

AAAAA Div. 1 Polls

- | | |
|---------------|---------------------|
| 1. Ridge View | 6. Ashley Ridge |
| 2. Dorman | 7. West Ashley |
| 3. Dutch Fork | 8. Carolina Forest |
| 4. Cane Bay | 9. Sumter |
| 5. Byrnes | 10. Fort Dorchester |

SCBCA AAAAA Div. 2 Top Seniors

Ja’Quell Brown, Goose Creek
Damien Kinloch, Berkeley
Lucas Wiersma, TL Hanna
Sebi Boyogueno, Riverside
Wallace Campbell, Fort Mill

AAAAA Div. 2 Polls

- | | |
|----------------|----------------|
| 1. Goose Creek | 6. TL Hanna |
| 2. Westwood | 7. Irmo |
| 3. Greenville | 8. St. James |
| 4. Riverside | 9. Nation Ford |
| 5. Fort Mill | 10. Eastside |

SCBCA AAAA Top Seniors

Treven Raymon, South Pointe
Quh’mareon Webb, North Augusta
Malik Tinsley, Lancaster
Jordan Rouse, North Augusta
KJ Allen, Wilson

AAAA Boys Polls

- | | |
|--------------------|----------------|
| 1. North Augusta | 6. Darlington |
| 2. Gray Collegiate | 7. Bluffton |
| 3. Crestwood | 8. Chapman |
| 4. Brookland-Cayce | 9. Camden |
| 5. Wilson | 10. Hartsville |

Johnsonville, continued from pg. 34

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

Berkeley, continued from pg. 24

ing hard and we’re getting better. We have to control what we can control and try to peak at the right time.”

Berkeley is experienced for the most part but the roster still has a lot of underclassmen. Peace has only three seniors and only one, **Madison Thomas**, is a regular starter. Thomas averages 7.1 points and 4.7 rebounds per game this season.

Senior **Demi Gray** is capable of starting but is usually first off the bench. She averages 7.4 points per game. Senior **Briahana Thompson** is a transfer into the program and plays as a reserve.

Sophomore **Alaina Carter** returns as the top player and is averaging 13.3 points and 3.5 assists per game. Junior post **Imani Levey** averages 10.1 points and 6.2 rebounds per game.

Junior **Amani McCray** is the top rebounder at 8.8 boards per game. She also averages 7.6 points per outing. Sophomore **Kennedy Caldwell** rounds out the starting lineup and averages 7.1 points and

Carolina Academy, continued from pg. 59

record.

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.

Meanwhile, the volleyball team participated in the SCISA state tournament but came up short in

Palmetto Christian, continued from pg. 45

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 coach Tyson.

Anna Grace Works comes off the bench and

Recruiting, continued from pg. 37

One reason he likely opted to transfer to Ocean-side Collegiate is the fact that the state’s top quarter-back for next season is **Aiden Manavian** (6-0,185) and he has led the Sharks to back-to-back state titles the past two years. Manavian has already passed for over 8,000 yards in his career. Last season, as a junior, he completed 70 per cent of his attempts while passing for 4.027 yards and 41 touchdowns in one season.

BHP, continued from pg. 61

Miller-Brown at the guard spots with senior 3-year letterman **Jakyri Anderson** and sophomore **Eugene Robinson** as the forwards.

Robinson was leading the team in scoring with an 18.6 points-per-game average and in rebounding with a 5.6 average. Bolden was averaging 14.5 points while being the assists leader at 3.4.

Miller Brown was leading the team in steals at 2.3 while scoring at an 11.6 clip and dealing out 2.9 as-sists. Walker was averaging 11.2 points.

Mullins, continued from pg. 30

berry was an All-Region selection last year, averaging 11.5 points pre game. Ford averaged 10.6

Senior wing **Autumn Worley** is the other returning starter. There were supposed to be four returning starters, but senior **Moriah McLeod** was lost for the year with a torn anterior cruciate ligament.

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**

2.8 assists per game this season.

Filling roles as reserves are junior **Abie Hayes**, sophomores **Jakia Burton** and **Kaelynn Caldwell**, and freshman **Alana Everette**.

“I try to play as many as I can to build some depth and have every player ready when we need them,” Peace said. “I like our depth. Some of the backups are capable of starting.”

Berkeley will have a battle for the region title with Goose Creek and Wando. The strength of the region will help come playoff time.

The boys basketball team also will make a run at the state title. The Stags reached the Lower State title game last season. Coach **Matthew Mullins** has his squad at 11-6 this season, including a 2-1 start to region play.

Though top returner **Damien Kinloch** is out with an injury, there is solid experience returning.

Forward **John Cleveland**, who was a double-digit scorer last season, leads the way.

their bid for a state title. The Bobcats finished the season with nine wins.

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 football team closed its regular season with

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-**

Manavian and Kelly-Murray are a match made in heaven. They will help each other no doubt.

The remaining top 10 2027 prospects by the HSSR include Irmo defensive end **Jaiden Bryant** (6-3, 245), Summerville running back **Jayven Williams** (6-8,165, and Spartanburg running back **Trenton Lynch** (5-9,185).

Byrnes prospect **Chanin Harris** (6-1, 170) is a top 10 prospect at wide receiver and he is rated

Anderson was averaging 8.6 points and 4.0 rebounds.

Junior **Pearson Summey** is the first player off the bench. He is averaging 5.0 points and 2.8 rebounds. Tysl has three post players he makes good use of in 6-foot-3-inch senior **Kanaza Bryant** and sophomores **Nick Sargent** and **Charlie Haynie**, 6-5 and 6-4, respectively.

“We tend to get much larger in the frontcourt when we sub Nick, Charlie or Kanaza into the lineup,” Tysl

She averaged 8.8 points.

The other starters are junior wing **Jakenna Bac-cus** and junior forward **Adrionna Bridgett**. Providing valuable minutes off the bench are sophomore wing **Ivory Timmons**, sophomore low post player **Ta’Monei Brock** and junior guard **Na’ Kevia Ger-**

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.

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 various roles.

“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.”

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 four-game losing streak and sent the Bobcats into the postseason with a lot of confidence. However, Thomas Heyward got some revenge with a playoff victory.

deth have come off the bench to provide solid play at the guard position.

number seven over-all by the *HSSR*. The remaining three players in the coveted Top 10 include Sumter quarterback **Frankin Richardson** (6-2, 220), South Pointe DL **Seth Tillman** (6-3, 260) and Gaffney LB **Kendarius “Peanut” Bailey** (6-0, 215) is the state’s top LB from the 20027 class in South Carolina.

We will dive more into the 2027 class in South Carolina next issue.

said.

Like Sargent and Haynie, junior **Cody Poole** joined the varsity from the junior varsity. Junior **Elijah Jackson** came from Hanna with Miller Brown.

Tysl hopes to solidify the Bears’ rotation coming down the homestretch of the regular season.

“We will also need to create more depth off the bench with a more reliable rotation from players 7-10,” he said.

ald.

Other members of the team are senior **Naomi Carter**, senior **Quentia Dickerson**, senior **Rionah Wright** and senior **Jada Davis**.

Div. II AAAAA finals against **Greenville** last year at the Florence Civic Center.

The Gators are currently 18-1 and they are playing like a snowplow clearing the way of downtown Fargo, North Dakota these days. The *HSSR* is confident that **Goose Creek** will emerge as the Lower State boy’s champions this season. Who they square off against in the state finals is anyone’s guess right now.

From the court, after the game last year, Coach Hall let his feelings out after the defeat. “You can not beat a team when they shoot almost 40 free throws,” said Hall. “I told our guys that you have no control over the officiating, but you must play through it. For the most part I thought we did, but it was too much to overcome.”

Before coming to Goose Creek 20 years ago, Coach Hall won a state title at **North Charleston High School**. He was a two- time HSSR-SCISA all-player at Pinewood Prep under Hall of Fame coach **Pat Eidson**.

Goose Creek is led by senior guard Ja’Quell **Brown** who scored 27 points against Greenville in the finals last year. They have seven players back who played in the state title game a year ago.

Greenville, under first year veteran head coach **Yerrick Stoneman**, are currently 13-4 but they have lost to some out-of-state powerhouse teams, and they are undefeated in their region. Coach Stoneman is also a state championship coach, and he will have his team playing their best come play-off time.

Greenville returns three starters from last year’s gold medal winners led by senior PG **Caden Coleman** (17 pts) who had 21 points in the big game. Senior F **Gavin Griffin** (16.6) is also back along with junior SG Tucker Scholl (14.6 pts) a game.

Westwood (16-1) is currently capable of making it to the gold medal round led by senior PG **Jayden Crews** (14.5 pts), senior **D’Marcus Thomas** (12.4 pts), and **Cylan McLeod** (10.6 pts).

Fort Mill (15-4) has also turned some heads with their recent OT win over Byrnes. They are well-coached by **Myron Lowery**. Fort Mill is led by soph PG **Jermier Nelson** (21.1 pts), senior SG **AJ Washington** (17.8 pts), and senior G **Wallace Campbell** (13.6 points).

Riverside (16-2) could be a spoiler before the dust settles in March. They are led by senior F **Sebi Boyogueno** (6-4, 190) who is averaging 31 points a game.

HSSR Prediction For Gold Medal Round: (Rematch) Greenville vs Goose Creek

The AAAA Boys Preview:

The SCHSLAAAA boys’ basketball championship will be last state finals match-up played starting at 6 p.m. on Saturday March, 7 at the

SCBCA AAA Top Seniors

Eric Gray, Union County
Khalid Sherman, Loris
Abe Davinroy, Oceanside Collegiate
Jordan McGahee – Or’burg Wilkinson
Jonathon Perry – Christ Church

AAA Boys Polls

- | | |
|------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Christ Church | 6. Orangeburg-Wilk. |
| 2. St Joseph’s | 7. Georgetown |
| 3. Loris | 8. Waccamaw |
| 4. Fox Creek | 9. Mountain View Prep |
| 5. Keenan | 10. Dillon |

SCBCA AA Top Seniors

Eli Brown – Chesnee
Darius Brooks – Hampton County
Antwon Young – York Prep
Ta’Maj Gilliam, Batesburg-Leesville
Zakaden Clyburn, Andrew Jackson

AA Boys Polls

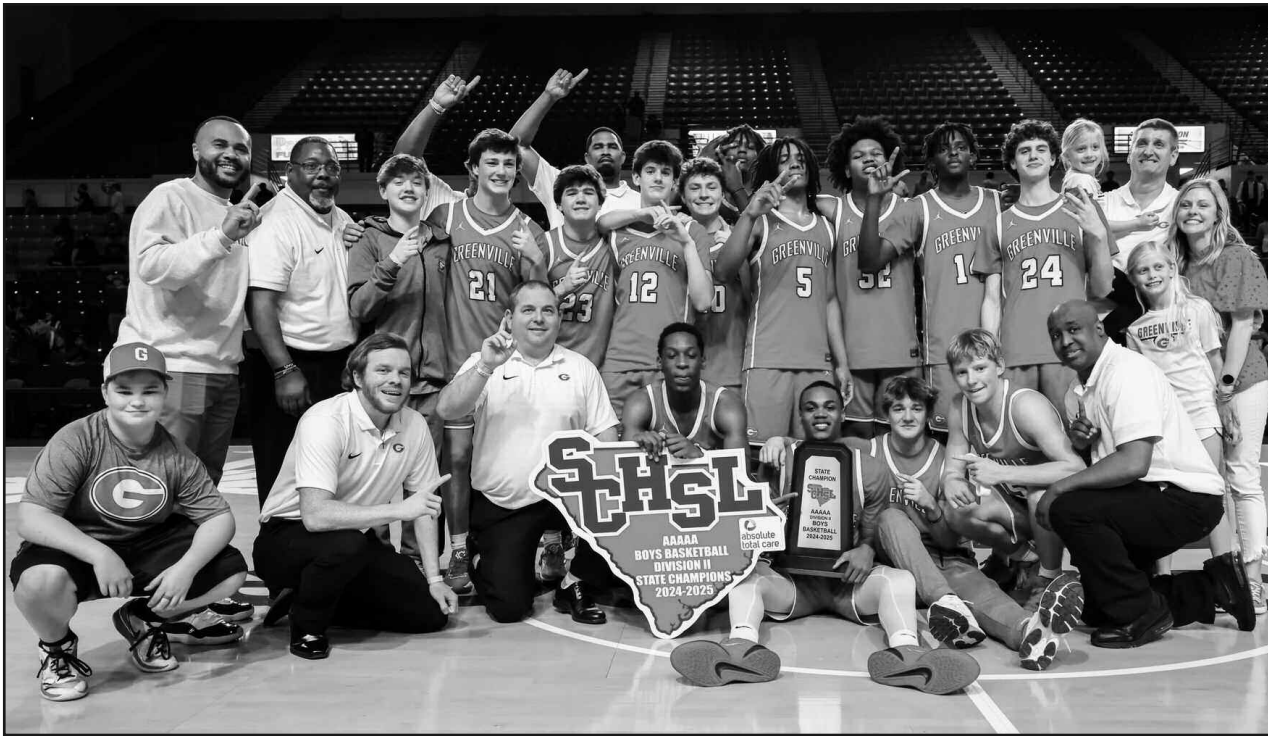
- | | |
|--------------------|---------------|
| 1. High Point Acad | 6. Central |
| 2. Andrew Jackson | 7. Ninety-Six |
| 3. Hampton County | 8. Marion |
| 4. Liberty | 9. Pelion |
| 5. Philip Simmons | 10. Mullins |

SCBCA Class A Top Seniors

Jaden Baylor, Abbeville
Tony Odom, CA Johnson
Cadien Ramsey, Cross
Terrance McFadden, Bethune Bowman
Aissaic Germany, CA Johnson

Class A Boys Polls

- | | |
|-------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Bethune-Bowman | 6. Carver’s Bay |
| 2. Abbeville | 7. Calhoun County |
| 3. Horse Creek | 8. Green Sea Floyds |
| 4. CA Johnson | 9. Hunter-Kinard Tyler |
| 5. Latta | 10. Cross |



2024-25 Boys AAAAA Div. 2 Basketball Champions - Greenville Red Raiders

Colonial Life Arena at USC, and wonder who the final wo teams will be left standing to battle it out in the gold medal round?

The big news in AAAA boys’ basketball coming into the season was the return of **Dion Bethea** to the **Gray Collegiate (14-2)** team where he had coached six War Eagle teams to AA titles in the past before leaving two years ago to become an as-sistant at **Georgia Southern**.

Coach Bethea recently told the *HSSR*, “We’re just trying to build the championship culture back,” he said, “With me leaving for a year it kind of got broken up a bit.”

Gray is being led by 6-6 **Kennesaw State** signee **Levi Bell** along with **Irmo** 6-6 PF transfer **Jayden Rivers**. These two studs are a key reason why the War Eagles must be considered top contenders for the AAAA title this season.

Lancaster defeated **North Augusta** 69-55 last year in the finals, but the Bruins suffered heavy graduation losses, and they are currently (8-11) are not ranked. However, senior PG **Malik Tinley** (18.4 pts) is having a solid senior season once again.

On the other hand, the North Augusta boys of head coach **Tony Hararell** contenders but they must find a way to get ahead of region for Gray Collegiate, a team they lost too in December 64-56.

Four players on last year’s team returned to the NA team this year. They are led by top scorer G **Quh’mareon Webb** who had 10 points in last year’s state finals. Others are G **Jodan Rouse**, G **Tojan Nabriat**, and **Zayvion Harris**.

Darlington’s (15-4) recent win over **Crestwood**

kept them 5-0 in their region and head coach **Brad Knox** has put together a solid team. The top two players on the team include senior G **LaHenry Yarbrough** (17 pts) and senior G **Rodney Spears** (9 pts) as the top two scorers on the team.

Chapman (14-3) head coached by **Jared St. Charles**, has a solid team in the AAAA upper state and they could make a deep run in the playoffs. They are led by junior SG **Grayden Humphries** (16.4 pts), senior SG **Hawk Smith** (12.2 pts) and soph PG **Cade St. Charles** (10.4 pts).

Other teams in AAAA with deep playoff run potential are **May River** (17-2), **Midland Valley** (13-4), **Hartsville** (11-5), **Daniel** (11-7), and Camden (12-5).

HSSR Prediction For Gold Medal Round: Chapman or Camden vs Gray Collegiate

Class AAA Boy’s Preview:

The AAA boys’ basketball championship will be battled out on Friday March 6 at 4 p.m inside the Colonial Life Center at USC and the *HSSR* feels strongly that the **Christ Church** (14-1) boy’s bus will arrive early for the event.

Last year **Keenan** defeated **Powdersville** 58-53 in the boy’s AAA finals at the Florence Civic Center as the Raiders won their 10th state title. It was Keenan head coach **Zach Norris**’ 8th state title at Keenan. **Powdersville** suffered heavy graduation losses are currently (5-13).

Keenan (15-5) is led by soph PG **Antonio Caughman** (14.5 pts), soph PF **Bryson Schofield** (9.4 pts) and senior F **Broderick Andrson**, Jr (8.4 pts).

Christ Church is head coached by veteran
See **Boys Basketball**, pg. 67

SCHSL Girls Basketball Feature

A look inside SCHSL Girls’ hoops from top to bottom

By Billy G. Baker
Publisher
Moncks Corner—The 2025-26 SCHSL State Basketball Finals for the 12 surviving girl’s teams comprised from Div. I AAAAA, Div. II AAAAA, Class AAAA, Class AAA, Class AA, and Class A will be contested at the Colonial Life Center on the campus of the University of South Carolina between March 5 through March 7.

The AAAAA Div. I girl’s finals is scheduled for 6 p.m. on Friday March, 6. The Div. II gold medal round is scheduled for 6 p.m. on Thursday March, 6 while the AAAA girl’s final is to be played at USC at 4 p.m. on Saturday March, 7. The AAA girl’s state finals will be played out at 2 p.m. on Friday March, 6 with the AA girl’s finals set for 2 p.m. on Thursday March, 5. The Class A girl’s championships will be at noon on Saturday March, 5.

The Lower State girl’s finals will all be played at the Florence Civic Center on February 27-28. The upper state girl’s finals will be played on agreed upon neutral sites on February 27-28 also.

Div. I AAAAA Girls:
Last year **Blythewood** defeated **Summerville** at the Florence Civic Center to earn the Div. I AAAAA state title and the Lady Bengals (14-4, 5-0) are currently ranked number three in the *HSSR* ranking released on January 15.
Blythewood returns the talented duo of highly regarded forward **Chase Thomas** who scored 18 points in last year’s finals along with guard **India Williams** who poured in 22 points. They certainly have the horses to pull the victory wagon into the

SCBCA Elite Girls Players
(All Classes)

Chloe Hudson, Rock Hill
Ja’Nyia Cunningham, South Pointe
Khalia Hartwell, Westside
Ni’Yonna Asbelle, Andrew Jackson
Cela Grant, North Augusta
Kaleigh Lucas, South Pointe
Ashlyn Evans, Byrnes
Kami Roach, Walhalla

SCBCA AAAAA Div. 1
Top Seniors

Chase Thomas, Blythewood
India Williams, Blythewood
Ava Rush, Wando
Morgan White, Dorman High
Miracle McLean, Carolina Forest

AAAAA Div. 1 Polls

1. Byrnes
2. Mauldin
3. Blythewood
4. Dorman
5. Spartanburg

6. Wando
7. Sumter
8. Carolina Forest
9. Dutch Fork
10. Lexington



2024-25 Girls AAAAA Div. 1 Basketball Champions - Blythewood Bengals

Colonial Life Center at 6 p.m. on March 6 with a huge local crowd supporting them.
Summerville (6-10) was hit hard by graduation losses and the top contenders from the lower state in Div/ I AAAAA appear to be current 6th ranked **Wando**, seventh ranked **Sumter** along with **Carolina Forest**.

Wando (14-2, 2-1) has three players averaging in double figures. Freshman guard **Bella McKevitt** (13.1), **First Baptist** transfer **Ava Rush** (12.9 pts and 8.2 rebounds) along with sophomore forward **MaKenna Reynolds** (11.2 points) give the lady Warriors a lot of offensive scoring power.
The *HSSR* has strong feelings that *Blythewood* could be knocked off the Div. I AAAAA mountain by either **Byrnes** (16-1), or **Dorman** (14-3) when the Upper State finals are settled. In a head-to-head region 2-AAAAA game recently **Dorman** defeated **Byrnes** 55-49.

Byrnes is led by 9th grade PG **Ashlyn Evans** (13.2 pts), junior SG **Ellison Silver** (13.1 pts) and inside player **Jaida Jordan** (10.1 pts & 6.9 rebounds). Dorman also has three players in double figures led by center **Morgan White** (20.4 pts & 10.4 rebounds), junior PG **Makayla Moore** (13.1 pts), and senior guard **Ri Wallace** (10.1 pts).
From Region 6-AAAAA 8th ranked **Carolina Forest** (11-4, 3-1) could make a deep run also and they are led by a trio of double scorers also. They include senior prospect **Miracle McLean** (16.8 pts & 11 rebounds), 510 PF **Macy Floyd** 12.5 pts

SCBCA AAAAA Div. 2
Top Seniors

Danielle Oliver, Greenwood
Madison Thomas, Berkeley
Ava Owens, Greenville
Shirah Harris, Gaffney
Kyndal Haroski, Riverside

AAAAA Div. 2 Polls

1. N Myrtle Beach
2. Goose Creek
3. Berkeley
4. Greenwood
5. Irmo

6. Gaffney
7. Eastside
8. Greenville
9. Catawba Ridge
10. Eastside

& 7.3 rebounds) and junior G **Mayissa Dorceley** (12.2 pts).
Lexington (14-3) is a contender out of Region 4-AAAAA and they are led by center **Sydni Anderson** (14.4 pts & 9.4 reb) along with junior SG **Cassidy Harry** (12.3 pts).
HSSR Prediction For Gold Medal Round:
Dorman or Byrnes versus Wando

Div. II AAAAA:
The Div. II AAAAA state finals is scheduled for the Colonial Life Center at USC at 6 pm on Thursday March, 5, and at this point of the season, it appears that top ranked **North Myrtle Beach** (15-0) is likely to face number two ranked **Goose Creek** (15-1) in the Lower State finals, while in the upstate the final two contenders are likely to be last year’s runner-up and 4th ranked **Greenwood** (14-3) versus sixth ranked **Gaffney** (12-5) from the upper state.

Greenwood lost to **Berkeley** 60-54 last year in the finals. Two players on the Stags championship team transferred to Goose Creek in **Alyanna Moses** and **Natalia Madison-Ladson** making the Gators a stronger team for sure. Goose Creek, head coached by **Jabari Deas**, is led by freshman **Madeline Dates** (20.4 pts) and soph guard **Celeste Griffin** (9 pts) a game.
The undefeated MMB Chiefs are led by junior **Madison Vereem** (16.6 pts & 4.2 R) along with senior **Sophia Powell** (15.6 pts & 6.9 R) and **Ju-**

SCBCA AAAA
Top Seniors

Autumn Joseph, Darlington
Jhnai Sumter, Lower Richland
Teonna Draughn, AC Flora
Monasia Clinkscale, Westside
Lakiara Ayona Alexander, Camden

AAAA Girls Polls

1. North Augusta
2. Westside
3. South Pointe
4. Camden
5. South Florence

6. Daniel
7. Blue Ridge
8. Darlington
9. Lower Richland
10. Wilson

Boys Basketball, continued from pg. 5
John Butler. The Cav’s are led by senior SG **David Dixon** (14 pts), senior Big Man **Jonathan Perry** (13.4 pts), and senior PF **Jude Hall** (9.2 pts).

Keenan might be challenged by **Loris** (16-3) in the Lower state finals, and this would be a classic game between the country boys from a rural community versus a group of players from the big city of Columbia.

Loris is coached by **Andrew Eads**. The Lions are led on the boards by Big Man MyKhai Bell (8.3) and in scoring by senior G **Nigel Miller** (15.6 pts), senior G **Khalid Sherman** (14.4 pts), and senior G **Khalil Sherman** (11.9 pts).
Fox Creek (13-4) could also make a run. They are coached by **Tim Butler**. They are led in scoring by junior G **Chanze Allen** (14.5), junior **Kobe Sims** (13.4) along with junior **Justin Vining** (12.9).

HSSR Prediction For Gold Medal Round:
Christ Church vs Keenan or Loris
The AA Boys Basketball Preview:
The AA boys’ basketball championship finals will begin at 4 p.m. on Thursday March 5 inside the Colonial Life Center at USC.

You might have a better chance guessing the power ball numbers then predicting what two teams are going to meet in the AA boy’s finals this year.
Last year **Atlantic Collegiate Academy** defeated **High Point Academy** 58-52 to win the AA title at the Florence Civic Center. High Point Academy (17-2) is likely to be back in the finals, but Atlantic Collegiate Academy (7-8) is in a rebuilding season, although they are 5-1 in their region right now.

High Point Academy head coach **Lee Sartor** will forever be known as the man who coached **Zion Williamson** at **Spartanburg Day** a few years
Girls Basketball, continued from pg. 7

West Oak (16-3) will travel to Walhalla on Jan. 20 for a Region 1-AAA show down. West Oak has four starters averaging double figures and they are capable of being a spoiler. They are led by soph G **Kinady Marcengill** (12.1 pts), junior 5-10 F **Ashton Sosby** (12.4 pts & 10.3 R) along with senior PG **Joey Burgess** (11.3 pts) and junior **Emma Simpson** (10 pts & 6.6 R) per game.
HSSR Prediction For Gold Medal Round:
Rematch Between Walhalla and Dillon.

Class AA Girls:
The SCHSL Class AA girl’s finals will take place on Thursday March 5 at 2 pm at the USC Colonial Life Arean and they are numerous contenders to win this classification.

Top ranked **Clinton** (18-1) is an interesting but well-coached study under the direction of coach **John Gardner**. The Lady Red Devils have no starters in double figures, yet they average 52.6 points a game. Their best player could be 6-1 junior PF **Kemaria Shelton** averaging 7.6 and 6.4 rebounds a game.

The top Clinton scorer is 7th grader **Allenson Cook** (8.9 pts & 4.6 steals) followed by senior G **Mylayja Thompson** (8.7 pts), and senior F **McKenzie Clark** (8.1 pts).
Clinton could get a push from Region 2-AA member **Ninety-Six** (15-1). They are led by Katie Fortner (11.6 pts) and Emma Gentry (9.4 pts & 9.7 R) a game.
In the Lower state **Atlantic Collegiate** (13-2) has played a very competitive schedule. They are

ago. Coach Sartor came to High Point from **Erskine College** where he served as the head coach for several seasons.
High Point returns two key starters from last year’s runner-up team. They are junior F J’Sean Sanders (18.9 pts), and senior G **Deylen Whitaker** (10.7 pts). Senior guard **Chris Copeland** (14.6 pts) is a newcomer to the team.

The *HSSR* had been high on **Andrew Jackson (12-3)** until they suffered back-to-back losses against **Central** and **Loris** on Jan. 16-17. AJ are led by two top scorers in senior SF **Zeke Clyburn** (21.4) and senior G **Samias Seegars** (18.8).
The success of the football team must be carrying over to **Central** (13-5) as head coach Desmond Sowell’s team is 5-0 and appeared headed to winning a region title. The Eagles are in scoring by senior G **Tazhie Webber** (17.4 pts), **Jordan Crowder** (16.9 pts) and senior G **Jakari Hollomon** (11.9 pts).

Hampton County (13-4), coached by **Joshua James**, could be a lower state challenge to High Point. They are led in scoring by senior G **Darius Brooks** (16.6), senior SG **Jacquin Solomon** (12.90) and soph SF **Maryln Adkins** (10).
When **Chesnee (12-6)** beat **Liberty** (15-4) 48-25 on Jan. 16, that altered some thinking about what upstate teams might be able to challenge High Point Academy. We will just have to wait and see.

HSSR Prediction For Gold Medal Round:
High Pointe Academy Vs. Hampton County
The Class A Boys’ Basketball Preview:

The boy’s SCHSL Class A state finals will take place on Saturday March 7 at 2 p.m. inside the Colonial Life Arena at USC.
Last year **Denmark-Olar** defeated **Abbeville** 58-52 at the Florence Civic Center to earn the

led by soph G **DaZena Capers** (11.7 pts), 9th grade SG **Erin Williams** (8.2 pts) and senior F **Micah Davis** (8.1 pts & 5.1 R) per game.
Kingstree coach **James Price** has had his team knocking on the door of Class AA for the past few years and this might be the year the Blazers knock it down. The team is led by talented junior inside player **Naydia Shaw** (17.9 pts & 10.4 R) along with senior G **Demia Mosely** (11.4 pts) a game.
Do not be fooled by the record of defending AA champion **Andrew Jackson** (11-5) as three of losses came against **Gaffney**, **Ridge View**, and **Dutch Fork**. They did only return two starters from last year’s 28-3 team that bombed **Eau Claire** 89-36 in the finals. **Ni’Yonna Asbelle** poured in 30 points in the title game a year ago and she came back along with her (25.6 pts) game. The other returning starter is junior SG **Trinty Delly** (13.3 pts) a game.

AJ head coach **Steven Fair** is a veteran coach who knows how to coach teams up to meet the challenge.

HSSR Prediction For Gold Medal Round:
Clinton or Andrew Jackson versus Atlantic Collegiate

Class A Girls Preview:
The SCHSL Class A Girl’s basketball finals will take place on Saturday March 7 at noon inside the USC Colonial Life Arean.
The big question right now is what the team from the upper state will be challenging Lower State Power **Military Magnet** (14-4) who are

school’s first boy’s state title sending head coach **Hercules Davis** into a happy retirement.
Marcus Rivera, a one-time mayor of Barnwell, is the new coach, and the team is currently 6-15 but 4-1 in the region and playing much better. They are led by junior G **Christian Rivera** (27.1 pts), and the top rebounder is 6-7 **William Ross** (6).

Number two, ranked **Abbeville** (10-2), has an excellent opportunity to get back to the state finals. Veteran head coach **Douglas Belcher** has the Panthers 8-0 in the region right now. The team is led by senior **Jaden Baylor** (19.1 pts), soph G **Jame-rion Williams** (14.7) and soph G **Jamiyus McManus** (10.6 pts).

Bethune-Bowman (14-3) is ranked number one in the latest Class A boy’s ranking. They lost twice to bigger schools in competitive games, but their 60-51 loss to **Scott’s Branch** (8-9) recently is a bit concerning. The team is le dy senior SF **Terrance McFadden** (16.4 pts), soph G **Jaeon Bell** (11.7 pts) and junior G **Kejuan Guinyard** (8.6 pts).
Horse Creek Academy (14-4) is also 7-0 in region play coached by **Chon Matthews**. They are led in scoring by soph PG **David Kearse** (10.1 pts).

The *HSSR* feels like **Carvers Bay** (13-4, 5-0), head coached once again by **Jeff Mezzatesta**, could be the lower state champion when the dust clears. They are led by junior PG **Jamie Graham** (18.3 pts), senior G **Kenard Heyward** (14 pts), and soph G **Ethan Morris** (10.6 pts).
Watch out for teams like **CA Johnson** (11-7 & 7-0) and **Latta** (11-3, 5-1) as they have strong teams as well at Class A level.

HSSR Prediction For Gold Medal Round:
Abbeville Vs. Carvers Bay

heavily favored to defend and claim their 5th state title in six seasons.
Military Magnet has played an extra tough schedule against teams like **Goose Creek**, **Ridge View**, **Ashley Ridge**, **Keenan** and several out of state power houses. Two of their top three players are 8th graders so the future is very bright. The team is led by senior F prospect **Da’Nariyah Williams** who led all scorers in last year’s title game with 18 points. She is currently (16.2 pts & 9.8 R) per game. **Mariah Brown** is a talented 8th grade PG (13.2 pts) along with 8th grade guard **Deaury Smith** (10.9 pts) a game.
Number two ranked **Great Falls** (12-2) is led by one of the top 7th graders in the state in **Makenzie Beatty** (24.3 pts & 4.3 R) a game. Grace page is a 9th grader averaging (11.2 pts) a game.

The **North High** (14-3) girls could emerge as a team to beat in the upper state led by senior PG **Kailen Parks** (18.9 pts) and 5-10 junior W **Jailyn Williams** (14.6 pts & 7.9 R) per game.
Latta (14-3) is a likely team to meet Military Magnet in the Lower State Class A finals in Florence. The Lady Vikings are led by three players in double figures. They include soph F **Aliyah Tisdale** (14.5 pts), senior guard **Kaliya Herman** (13 pts), and junior G **Jeziyah Page** (11 pts) a game.

HSSR Prediction For Gold Medal Round:
North vs Military Magnet

SCMat.com Girls Wrestling Rankings (Individual)

100 lbs.		135 lbs.	
1. Addie Shaw - Indian Land (Sr., 2025 100 1st, 2024 100 2nd, 2023 Lower 106 2nd)		1. MiHeaven Evans - Chester Girls (Jr., 2025 140 2nd, 2024 125 SQ)	
2. Kymyhia Jamison - Bamberg-Ehrhardt (Sr., 2025 100 SQ, 2023 Lower 106 4th)		2. Sophia Voudouris - River Bluff Girls (Jr., 2025 135 2nd, 2024 135 SQ)	
3. Kamari Smith - South Florence Girls (Sr., 2024 105 SQ)		3. Zoe Osman - West Florence Girls (Sr., 2025 140 SQ)	
4. Alora McAteer - Dreher Girls ()		4. Mckena Pertell - High Point Academy Girls ()	
5. Abbie Daniel - ALA Lexington Girls (So.)		5. Maeve Murphy Booth - Catawba Ridge Girls ()	
6. Natalie Troyan - Northwestern Girls (So.)		6. Sinai Odukogbe - Blythewood Girls (Fr.)	
7. Marissa Marsar - Ashley Ridge Girls ()		7. Julieta De La Cruz - Chesnee Girls (Fr.)	
8. Mari Jeffries - Chesnee Girls (Jr.)		8. Karmen Kemp - Mauldin Girls (Fr.)	
105 lbs.		140 lbs.	
1. Olesya Mullins - Beaufort Girls (Sr., 2025 105 2nd - SC, 2024 100 2nd - MI)		1. Malia Hart - Greenwood Girls (Jr., 2025 140 3rd)	
2. Ella Sheppard - Conway Girls (Jr., 2025 105 3rd, 2024 105 2nd)		2. Valeria De La Cruz - Chesnee Girls (Jr.)	
3. Kamyla Torres - Rock Hill Girls (Jr., 2025 100 4th)		3. Addison Martin - Dixie Girls (Jr., 2025 130 SQ)	
4. Aaliana Peterson - Hartsville Girls (Sr., 2025 100 SQ, 2024 100 SQ)		4. Catharine Cook - Fort Mill Girls ()	
5. Gabriella Murillo - Marlboro County Girls (Sr., 2024 105 SQ)		5. Tori Segarra - Byrnes Girls (So.)	
6. Alexia Ray - South Florence Girls (So.)		6. Olivia Marcotsis - Indian Land Girls ()	
7. Adestiny Carelock - Chester Girls (So.)		7. Grace Jumper - Chapin Girls (Sr., 2025 135 4th, 2024 135 SQ)	
8. Armani Burros - Chester Girls (Fr.)		8. Kami Burba - Blythewood Girls (Jr.)	
110 lbs.		145 lbs.	
1. Madilyn Beck - Rock Hill Girls (Sr., 2025 110 1st, 2024 110 1st, 2023 113 3rd)		1. Serenity State - Gaffney Girls (Sr., 2025 140 1st, 2024 135 2nd)	
2. Emma Sheppard - Conway Girls (Jr., 2025 110 3rd, 2024 110 3rd)		2. Bianca Connell - Mauldin Girls (Sr., 2025 155 1st, 2024 155 1st, 2023 152 1st)	
3. Kerrington Ratliff - Northwestern Girls (Jr., 2025 110 4th)		3. Alyssa Reynolds - Wando Girls (Sr., 2025 135 SQ)	
4. Ceanna Owen - Fort Dorchester Girls (So., 2025 105 4th)		4. Amy Robinson - River Bluff Girls (Sr., 2025 145 3rd)	
5. Karleigh Langley - Belton-Honea Path Girls (So.)		5. Givyn Dyer - Airport Girls (Sr., 2025 145 SQ, 2024 145 3rd)	
6. Kayliegh Machado - Woodruff Girls ()		6. Katelynne Blythe - South Pointe Girls (Sr.)	
7. Lily Jenkins Greer - Blue Ridge Girls ()		7. Alison Souvoravong - Philip Simmons Girls ()	
8. Miriam Arce - Greenwood Girls (So.)		8. Aliz Lemus - Spring Valley Girls ()	
115 lbs.		155 lbs.	
1. Cienna Heiselman - Byrnes Girls (Sr., 2025 115 2nd, 2024 115 SQ)		1. Alyciah Thomas - Rock Hill Girls (Sr., 2025 155 2nd, 2024 155 2nd)	
2. Jenger Rhodes - Rock Hill Girls (So., 2025 115 4th)		2. Makayla Hinchey - Hilton Head Girls (So., 2025 155 3rd)	
3. Alanise Ricardo - Greenwood Girls (Sr., 2024 125 2nd)		3. Stella Glenn - Union County Girls (Jr., 2025 145 2nd, 2024 140 2nd)	
4. Chloe Osteen - Boiling Springs Girls (Sr., 2025 110 SQ, 2024 105 3rd, 2023 Upper 106 3rd)		4. JaLeah Rice - Byrnes Girls ()	
5. Shana Gentle - Crecent Girls ()		5. Logan Wall - Boiling Springs Girls (Sr., 2025 145 SQ, 2024 145 SQ)	
6. Emma Lunsford - Midland Valley Girls (Sr., 2025 115 SQ)		6. Audra Petroff - Blythewood Girls (Sr., 2025 155 4th)	
7. Kymarielle Cleveland - Manning Girls (Sr., 2025 110 SQ)		7. Zey McKie - ALA Lexington Girls (Sr.)	
8. Hayden Hall - ALA Lexington Girls (Fr.)		8. Natalee Austin - Indian Land Girls ()	
120 lbs.		170 lbs.	
1. Rachel Hayes - Woodruff Girls (Sr., 2025 120 4th, 2024 105 4th)		1. Rory Travis - Gilbert Girls (Sr., 2025 155 SQ, 2024 145 2nd, 2023 145 2nd)	
2. Reagan Beard - Rock Hill Girls (Fr.)		2. Maliah Patton - Military Magnet Girls (So., 2025 170 SQ)	
3. Brylee Osteen - Boiling Springs Girls (So., 2025 120 SQ)		3. Kyrra Shipman-Lutz - River Bluff Girls (Jr., 2025 155 SQ)	
4. Kinley Harris - Northwestern Girls (Jr.)		4. Daniella Taylor - Cane Bay Girls ()	
5. Brynna Keys - West Florence Girls ()		5. Kennedy Heyward - Blythewood Girls (So.)	
6. Yongshan Tie - Ashley Ridge Girls (So., 2025 120 SQ)		6. Shamaria Wardlaw - Crescent Girls ()	
7. Sophia Ricardo - Greenwood Girls (So., 2025 125 4th)		7. Aviana Patterson - Greenville Girls (Sr.)	
8. Lael Morton-Wheeler - Goose Creek Girls (Sr., 2025 115 3rd)		8. Julianna Haas - Rock Hill Girls ()	
125 lbs.		190 lbs.	
1. Vivian Urriola - May River Girls (Jr., 2024 125 4th)		1. Makayla Vasser - Union County Girls (Jr., 2025 190 1st, 2024 170 2nd - Nebraska Class A)	
2. Bella Johnson - Boiling Springs Girls (Jr., 2025 105 SQ, 2024 100 SQ)		2. Heaven Whatley - Greenwood Girls (So., 2025 190 SQ)	
3. Audrey Naughton - Rock Hill Girls ()		3. Luna Vaughn - Mauldin Girls ()	
4. Ariel Daniels - South Florence Girls (Jr., 2025 120 2nd)		4. Leyhomis Garcia-Orta - Dorman Girls (Jr.)	
5. Nyla Charriez - River Bluff Girls ()		5. Shamyia Digsby-Williams - South Pointe Girls (Jr.)	
6. Guadalupe Jose - Greenwood Girls (So., 2025 130 SQ)		6. Azalea Hinton - Chester Girls (Sr., 2025 190 3rd, 2024 190 SQ)	
7. Finley Thielemier - May River Girls (Jr., 2025 125 SQ)		7. Natalia Clyburn - Lancaster Girls (Sr., 2025 190 SQ, 2024 235 3rd)	
8. Abigail Phillips - White Knoll Girls ()		8. Payton Souder - Goose Creek Girls (Sr., 2025 190 SQ, 2024 190 SQ)	
130 lbs.		235 lbs.	
1. Jourdyn Mootry - Hilton Head Girls (Jr., 2025 130 3rd)		1. Aislynn Castillo - Greenwood Girls (So., 2025 235 2nd)	
2. Legend Pender - Catawba Ridge Girls ()		2. Aniya Ruiz - Swansea Girls (Jr., 2025 235 1st)	
3. Anna Hannon - Gaffney Girls (Sr., 2025 120 3rd, 2024 120 3rd, 2023 113 4th)		3. Sarah Hodge - Chester Girls (Jr., 2025 235 3rd, 2024 235 4th)	
4. Tylar Smith - Woodruff Girls (So., 2025 125 2nd)		4. Bella Williams - Rock Hill Girls ()	
5. Hayden Moore - Swansea Girls (Sr., 2025 125 SQ, 2024 125 SQ, 2023 120 4th)		5. Makayla Alvarado - Northwestern Girls ()	
6. Tatiahna Thomas - Rock Hill Girls ()		6. Maggie Capps - River Bluff Girls ()	
7. Gracie Beaulieu - River Bluff Girls (Jr., 2025 130 SQ)		7. Elli Busby - Crescent Girls ()	
8. Ariea Adcox - Greer Girls (Jr.)		8. Kennedy Mitchell - Blythewood Girls (Sr., 2025 235 SQ)	

rnee Blye (9.1 pts & 7.7 R).
Head NMB coach **Heather Kearney**, who won 40 games in her first two years with the Chiefs, recently told the *HSSR*, “We want to get better every single day and take one game at the time.”

Gaffney has been made a tougher team by competing in Region 2-AAAAA, perhaps the strongest region in the state. They could finish third in their region behind Byrnes and Dorman but go on to win a Div. II AAAAA state title.

The Indians are now head coach by **Julian Wright** with the retirement of **Mark Huff** after last season. Gaffney recently lost to both **Byrnes** (59-55) and **Dorman** (66-64) and they a bounce, here or there, from winning both games.

The Indians are led by the 1-2 punch of senior F **Shirah Harris** (16.9 pts & 7,3 R) and junior guard **Tinah Hopper** (14.3 pts. & 8.3 R).

Coach Wright told the *HSSR*, ““For us to finish on a run we need to avoid bad stretches, both of those games with Byrnes and Dorman were games of runs by them,” said Coach Wright. “If we can play more consistently, that would put us in a great position.”

HSSR Prediction For Gold Medal Round:
Gaffney versus North Myrtle Beach

Class AAAA Girls:
The SCHSL state finals for the AAAA girls will be contested at 4 p.m. on Saturday March 7 at the USC Colonial Life Arena.

In the upper state the teams to compete for a state title are **Camden** (15-1) and they have a 61-57 OT win over North Augusta on their resume, but they did lose to **South Pointe** (75-63) for their lone loss thus far.

The *HSSR* is just being the messenger here when we predict top ranked **North Augusta** (15-1) is our choice to repeat as AAAA state champions this year. We just do not think that any team can beat them twice in one season, so we just must see how things play out. The Jackets already claim wins over **Dorman** (56-34) and **Goose Creek** (61-36) this season and that is the main reason we have them at number one right now.

Head coach **Al Young** coached up the team to their sixth state title in school history with a 50-37 win over **Westside** in the finals last year. NA returns the top two scorers in that game last season in **Ashley Walker** (15.8 pts & 4.1 R) along with **Celena Grant** (10 pts & 4.5 R) a game.

Camden, head coached by **Lewis Mungo**, is

SCBCA AAA Top Seniors	
Harmoni Williams, Or’burg Wilkinson Tiffany Helmer, St. Joseph’s Catholic Caroline Sweet- Powdersville Devyn Blackwell, Southside Christian Joanna Burgess, West Oak	
AAA Girls Polls	
1. Walhalla 2. Dillon 3. Oceanside Coll 4. Southside Christ 5. West Oak	6. Aynor 7. St. Joseph's 8. Fox Creek 9. Orangeburg-Wilk 10. Keenan



2024-25 Girls Class A Basketball Champions - Military Magnet Eagles

among the few teams in the state with four starters in double figures. They are junior 6-1 F **Ayona Alexander** (15.7 pts & 10.8 R), junior G **Braylin Mungo** (12.1 pts & 3.1 R), along with junior PF **Jillian Rush** (11.1 points) and junior wing **Harmony Jefferson** (10.9 pts) per game.

South Pointe, head coached by **Stephanie Butler-Graham**, are led by three talented players in double figures. They are 6-0 junior F **JaNyia Cunningham** (20.2 pts & 11.7 R), soph G **Kaleigh Lucas** (17.2 pts. & 3.1 R) along with junior **Tralyn Phillips** (10.6 pts) per game.

One can never count out **Westside** (15-1) under Hall of Fame head coach **Jackie Roberts**.

The Lady Rams return to being one of the top junior prospects in the nation in 6-5 center **Khalia Hartwell** who scored 21 points and grabbed 11 rebounds in the state finals loss to NA a year ago. Senior PG leader **Monasia Clinkscales** is also back to lead the Rams forward.

A strong challenge will come out of Region 2-AAAA with **Daniel** (15-1). The Lady Lions’ only loss was by one point (54-53) against top ranked **Byrnes**. They are led by three players in double figures. They are senior SG **Braelin Cumbee** (13.4 pts), junior F **Shala Williams** (12.3) and soph G **Campbell Epting** (10 pts). Daniel is head coached by **Cosandar Griffin**.

HSSR Prediction For Gold Medal Round:
Westside or Daniel vs North Augusta (potential repeat from last year)

Class AAA Girls:

See Girls Basketball, pg. 67

SCBCA AA
Top Seniors

Kylie Fortner, Landrum
Zimarika Moorer, Lake Marion
Micah Davis, Atlantic Collegiate
Zion Prioleau, Timberland
Mylayja Thompson, Clinton

SCBCA Class A
Top Seniors

Da’Nyriah Williams, Military Magnet
Kailya Herman, Latta
My’Keriyah Holmes, Lee Central
Naomi House, McBee
Kailen Parks, North

AA Girls Polls

1. Clinton
2. Ninety-Six
3. Atlantic Coll
4. Kingstree
5. Andrew Jackson

6. Landrum
7. Saluda
8. Timberland
9. Whale Branch
10. Marion

Class A Girls Polls

1. Military Magnet
2. Great Falls
3. North
4. Latta
5. HKT

6. Cross
7. Denmark-Olar
8. Lewisville
9. McCormick
10. Williston-Elko

SCISA Boys Basketball Feature

SCISA Boys region battles heating up as playoffs near

By: Gerald Doolittle

Goose Creek, S.C. – At this writing on January 15,2026 the **SCISA** Boys basketball region battles are heating up for post-season playoff seedings.

In **Class 4-A** can **Porter-Gaud** (12-3) defend their title? Can last seasons runners-up **Augusta Christian** (5-13) make it to the finals again?

At this writing the top five in order are **Pinewood Prep** (17-5), **Porter-Gaud** (12-3), **Ben Lippen** (14-7), **Laurence Manning** (12-3) and **John Paul II** (10-3).

In **Class 3-A** can **Hilton Head Prep** (4-9) defend their title? Can last season runners-up **Pee Dee Academy** (3-7) make it to the finals again?

At this writing the top five in order are **Calhoun Academy** (13-3), **St. Johns Christian** (13-5), **Florence Christian** (10-3), **Spartanburg Christian** (12-6) and **Colleton Prep Academy** (10-4).

In **Class 2-A** can **Cathedral Academy** (20-8) defend their title? Can last season runners-up **Andrew Jackson Academy** (5-15) make it to the finals again?

At this writing the top five in order are **Cathedral Academy** (20-8), **Cross Schools** (10-9), **Dorchester Academy** (8-6), **Bethesda Academy** (8-6) and **Charleston Collegiate** (7-2).

In **Class 1-A** can **Ragin Prep Christian** (9-11) defend their title? Can last season runners-up **Curtis Baptist** (9-7) make it to the finals again?

At this writing the top five in order are **Mead Hall** (8-2), **Cambridge Academy** (9-5), **Curtis Baptist** (9-7), **Ragin Prep Academy** (9-11) and **Richard Winn Academy** (7-5).

The top point makers so far are **Ayden Leith** (**Christian Academy**) 304, **Justin Bowdre** (**Mead Hall**) 270, **Tyler Cannon** (**South Aiken Baptist**) 218, **Ty Kennedy** (**Greenwood Christian**) 213, **Thomas Hester** (**St.Johns Christian**) 372, **Taylor Greene** (**Florence Christian**) 277.

Avery Ravenell (**Orangeburg Prep**) 276, **Oliver Barnes** (**Andrew Jackson Academy**) 453, **Tre Green** (**Pinewood Prep**) 390, **Nick Lindsay** (**Calhoun Academy**) 340, **Mateo Castillo** (**Colleton Prep**) 252, **Daivon Glover** (**Patrick Henry**) 244, **Trent Luechtefeld** (**Cross Schools**) 224.

Jake Wood (**Hilton Head Christian**) 239,

AAAA Basketball Polls

1.Pinewood Prep

2. Porter-Gaud

3. Laurence Manning

4. Ben Lippen

5. John Paul II

AAA Basketball Polls

1. Calhoun Academy

2. St. Johns Christian

3. Florence Christian

4. Colleton Prep

5. Spartanburg Christian



Last year, the Cathedral Academy boys claimed the SCISA AA boys title



2024-25 Hilton Head Prep boys won SCISA AAA last year



Last year, Porter Gaud claimed the SCISA AAAA boys crown

Tradd Law (St. Johns Christian) 289, Kais Parris (Pinewood Prep) 292, Jy’ell Preston (Trinity Collegiate) 253, Andrew Wiley (Cambridge) 200, Kavontay Rose (Ragin Prep) 313, Kingsly Shine (Curtis Baptist) 213.

Wade Marsh (Cardinal Newman) 217,Crews Felder (Calhoun Academy) 231, Hall Sease (Andrew Jackson) 216, Zach Nicastro (Cross Schools) 252, Garrison Vaughan (Laurens Academy) 200.

AA Basketball Polls

1. Cathedral

2. Cross Schols

3. Dorchester Academy

4. Bethesda

5. Charleston Collegiate

Class A Basketball Polls

1. Anderson Christian

2. Richard Winn

3. Wardlaw

4. Curtis Baptist

5. Ragin Prep

SCMat.com Wrestling Rankings (Individual)

144 lbs.

1. Travion Renwick - Union County (Jr., 2025 132 4th)

2. Brody Lawson - Broome (Jr., 2025 126 SQ, 2024 120 SQ)

3. Conner Kit - Powdersville (Jr., 2025 132 SQ)

150 lbs.

1. Josh Mulak - Woodruff (Jr., 2025 165 SQ)

2. Nick Morgan - Broome (Jr., 2025 150 SQ)

3. Daniel Aguilar - Swansea (So., 2025 144 SQ)

157 lbs.

1. Brayden Hill - Broome (Jr., 2025 144 3rd)

2. Jace Devlin - Crescent (Jr., 2025 157 SQ)

3. Tyree Hill - Union County (So., 2025 157 SQ)

165 lbs.

1. Sy Strobel - West-Oak (Jr., 2025 150 1st, 2024 132 3rd)

2. J.B. Tripp - Crescent (Sr., 2025 165 1st, 2024 165 1st, 2023 145 3rd)

3. Jayden Jenkins - Palmetto (Sr., 2025 165 2nd, 2024 150 2nd)

175 lbs.

1. Wyatt Saxon - West-Oak (Sr., 2025 175 3rd)

2. James Morris - Belton-Honea Path (So., 2025 175 SQ)

3. Landen Ritchie - Hanahan (Sr., 2025 157 SQ)

190 lbs.

1. Alex Wilker - Palmetto (Sr., 2025 190 2nd)

2. Gage Ballard - West-Oak (Sr., 2025 190 SQ, 2024 165 2nd)

3. Romeo Mendez - Walhalla (Sr., 2025 190 4th)

215 lbs.

1. Elijah Weston - West-Oak (So., 2025 215 3rd)

2. Jayden Jones-Wertz - Powdersville (Jr., 2025 215 SQ)

3. Preston Wilder - Palmetto (Jr.)

285 lbs.

1. Rody Barnett - Christ Church (Sr., 2025 285 1st - 3A, 2025 285 SQ, 2024 215 SQ - 2A-1A)

2. Adrian Hill - Woodruff (Sr.)

3. Michael Boyd - Palmetto (Sr., 2025 285 2nd)

AA / A

106 lbs.

1. Jacob Keaton - Liberty (Sr., 2025 106 2nd)

2. Cooper Stinson - Clinton (Jr., 2025 106 SQ)

3. Brian Ford - Bamberg-Ehrhardt (Sr., 2025 106 SQ)

113 lbs.

1. James Kay - Dixie (Sr., 2025 106 SQ, 2024 106 3rd)

2. Jordan Hilton-Kelly - Manning (Jr., 2025 106 4th)

3. Cameron Jackson - Clinton (Sr., 2025 113 SQ)

120 lbs.

1. Bryson Chappell - Chesnee (Fr.)

2. Andre Hall - Chester (Sr., 2025 120 1st - 2A-1A, 2024 120 4th - 3A)

3. Wyatt Thames - Timberland (Jr., 2025 106 1st, 2024 106 SQ)

126 lbs.

1. Raheem Rambert - Chester (Sr., 2025 126 2nd)

2. Drew Timmerman - Ninety-Six (Sr., 2025 120 3rd, 2024 106 3rd)

3. Carson Sturgess - Mid-Carolina (So., 2025 113 2nd)

4. Grady McManis - Liberty (Sr., 2025 132 SQ, 2024 120 2nd)

5. Cohen Kennington - Buford (Jr., 2025 126 SQ, 2024 126 SQ)

6. Jayden Martin - Dixie (Sr., 2025 126 SQ)

7. Tyler Kittrell - Bamberg-Ehrhardt (So., 2025 120 SQ)

8. Eli Barnhill - Chesnee (Jr., 2025 113 SQ)

132 lbs.

1. Alex Allison - Liberty (Sr., 2025 126 1st, 2024 106 1st, 2023 106 1st)

2. Jaheem Rambert - Chester (Sr., 2023 113 SQ - 3A)

3. Rylee Rushton - Ninety-Six (Sr., 2025 113 SQ, 2024 113 4th, 2023 106 4th)

138 lbs.

1. Dayton Daniel - ALA-Lexington (Sr., 2025 126 3rd)

2. Taven Pesaro - Chesnee (Jr., 2025 126 SQ, 2024 113 2nd)

3. Wesley White - Whale Branch (Sr., 2025 138 SQ)

144 lbs.

1. Thad Gerstenacker - Chesnee (Sr., 2025 138 1st, 2024 138 2nd, 2023 138 1st)

2. Nate Gardner - Buford (Sr., 2025 132 1st, 2024 132 SQ, 2023 132 SQ)

3. Xavier Rodgers - Dixie (Sr., 2025 150 SQ, 2024 144 SQ, 2023 138 SQ)

150 lbs.

1. Quinton Gerstenacker - Chesnee (Sr., 2025 144 1st, 2024 144 1st, 2023 132 SQ)

2. Brian Reed - Liberty (Sr., 2025 150 1st, 2024 126 2nd, 2023 113 2nd)

3. Ryker Woolstenhulme - Mid-Carolina (Jr., 2025 144 2nd, 2024 138 SQ)

157 lbs.

1. Cullen Spence - Liberty (Fr.)

2. Tyler Henderson - Chesnee (Sr., 2025 132 SQ, 2024 126 3rd, 2023 113 3rd)

3. Owen Berrios - Timberland (Sr., 2025 157 SQ)

165 lbs.

1. Mario Del Vecchio - Clinton (Jr., 2024 126 SQ - NJ, 2023 113 6th - FL 1A)

2. Darriyarn Baxley - Chester (Sr., 2025 157 1st - 2A-1A, 2024 150 3rd - 3A)

3. Reese Szymkowicz - Academic Magnet (Jr., 2025 157 SQ)

175 lbs.

1. Eris Steele - Chester (Sr., 2025 175 2nd)

2. Nathan Harris - Liberty (So., 2025 165 2nd)

3. Samuel Watson - Buford (Jr., 2025 175 SQ)

190 lbs.

1. Kayden Payne - Ninety-Six (Sr., 2025 190 2nd, 2024 175 2nd, 2023 152 SQ)

2. Collins Brown - Abbeville (Jr., 2025 175 1st)

3. Kevin Summers - Bridges Prep (Sr., 2025 165 4th)

215 lbs.

1. Tucker Bohn - Buford (Sr., 2025 215 2nd, 2024 215 1st, 2023 182 SQ)

2. Timmy Reznichenko - Chesnee (Sr., 2025 215 SQ)

3. TJ Wilmore - Chester (Sr.)

285 lbs.

1. Lucas Young - Dixie (Sr., 2025 285 1st, 2024 215 4th)

2. Jayren Holly - Chester (Sr., 2025 285 3rd)

3. TJ Oliver - Whitmire (Sr., 2025 285 SQ)

SCISA

106 lbs.

1. LJ Murphy - Cardinal Newman ()

2. James Del Mazo - John Paul II ()

3. Mateo Chavez - Trinity Collegiate (8th)

113 lbs.

1. Carter Lirgg - Cardinal Newman (Fr., 2025 106 1st)

2. Jake Wyatt - Hammond (Fr.)

3. Chase LaFountain - John Paul II ()

120 lbs.

1. Eli Lorang - Cardinal Newman (Fr., 2025 113 1st)

2. Angesom Ladd - Hammond (Sr., 2025 120 1st, 2024 120 2nd, 2023 113 1st)

3. Luciano Chavez - Trinity Collegiate (Jr.)

126 lbs.

1. Preston White - Ben Lippen (Sr., 2025 120 1st, 2024 113 1st, 2023 106 1st - 5A)

2. Jack Turner - Cardinal Newman (Jr., 2025 113 3rd - 4A)

3. Tripp Thiesen - John Paul II (So., 2025 113 3rd)

132 lbs.

1. Ethan Gottlieb - Cardinal Newman ()

2. Kent Clark - Ben Lippen (Fr.)

3. Max Gardner - Greenwood Christian ()

138 lbs.

1. Triston Johnson - Cardinal Newman ()

2. Luke Stone - Hammond (So.)

3. Cameron Wheeler - Heathwood Hall (Jr.)

144 lbs.

1. Cooper Smythe - Cardinal Newman (So., 2025 132 2nd, 2024 126 3rd)

2. Gideon Glenn - Ben Lippen (Fr., 2025 132 3rd)

3. Vincent Morris - Heathwood Hall (So.)

150 lbs.

1. Cobin Rabon - Hammond (Jr.)

2. Shayne Ross - Cardinal Newman (Jr.)

3. Jack Hannagan - John Paul II (Sr., 2025 150 2nd, 2024 150 2nd)

157 lbs.

1. Brian Orta - John Paul II (Sr., 2025 132 1st, 2024 138 2nd)

2. Charlie Jones - Cardinal Newman (So., 2025 138 3rd)

3. Stone Porter - Ben Lippen (So., 2025 138 3rd, 2022 106 2nd)

165 lbs.

1. Job Fitzpatrick - Camden Military Academy (Sr., 2025 175 3rd)

2. Luke Gjaklaj - Cardinal Newman (Sr., 2025 144 2nd)

3. William Fitts - Ben Lippen (So., 2024 132 3rd, 2023 126 3rd)

175 lbs.

1. Kai Sobey - Patrick Henry Academy (Fr.)

2. Gus May - Hammond (8th)

3. Caleb Casillas - Cardinal Newman ()

190 lbs.

1. Luke Sobey - Patrick Henry Academy (Jr., 2025 190 1st, 2024 165 1st)

2. Shamar Brown - Porter-Gaud (Fr.)

3. Gabriel Forbes - Augusta Christian (Jr.)

215 lbs.

1. Nolan Addeo - Hammond (Sr. 2025 215 1st - 4A AL, 2024 190 SQ - 4A AL, 2023 195 SQ - 4A AL, 2021 195 2nd - SCISA)

2. Wyatt Ogburn - Trinity Collegiate (Jr.)

3. Antwann Chisolm - Porter-Gaud (So.)

285 lbs.

1. Aiden Steele - Thomas Sumter ()

2. Sami Touma - Cardinal Newman ()

3. Carlie Muckelvaney - Pinewood Prep (Jr.)

Holly Hill Academy aiming for strong finishes

By David Shelton
Senior Writer
Holly Hill – As the winter sports season hits the final stretch drive, the basketball and wrestling programs at **Holly Hill Academy** are working towards a strong finish.

The basketball teams are kicking into region play and the girls team got off to a good start with a region win over Ridge Christian, the only other team in the region. Holly Hill notched a win over Curtis Baptist on Jan. 16. That win improved the overall record to 4-9. Four of those nine losses came in single digits so the team has competed pretty well against some larger schools.

Third-year head coach **Heath Prescott** has seen his team improve after a couple of tough seasons. He is hopeful that his 2025-26 team can take the next step.

“We play a pretty tough schedule so our record during the regular season may not be impressive but we should be battle-tested 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.

Eighth-grader **Milly Kate Prescott** is a returning starter that averaged 10 points per game as a seventh-grader varsity player. She has averaged 13.7 points and 5.1 rebounds per game this season.

Point guard **Kaley Bell** is the lone senior starter

and has been a top defender this season. He is averaging six points per game while junior **Essie Wolpert** averages 3.9 points and 4.8 rebounds per game. Freshman **Caitlyn Crisp** averages 4.7 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**, junior **Taylor Wright**, sophomore **Kaylee Cuttino** and freshman **Bailey Stanley**.

The boys basketball team has struggled this season, losing their first 12 contests. There are no seniors on the team. The big issue this season has been scoring as the Raiders have scored more than 30 points just twice in 12 games.

Juniors on the team are **Parker Kizer**, **Chase Holder**, **Tyler Green** and **Jordan Wren**. Sophomores include **Elliott Young**, **Jake Kirven**, **Aiden Burrows** and **Aarev Patel**. Rounding out the roster are eighth-graders **Mason Green** and **Liam Brown**. Holly Hill is establishing a wrestling program and it continues to gain interest. Though they cannot fill every weight class this season there are seven wrestlers competing well.

Jaxon Jones is wrestling at 122 pounds and **Hudson Redfern** is wrestling at 132 pounds. **Jayden Krier** is wrestling at 165 pounds and **Jakob Krier** is competing at 175 pounds.

Kaz Brown wrestles at 190 and **Clay Maxwell** is at 215. **Caleb Bell** is wrestling as a heavyweight.

two home runs, 15 runs batted in, 26 runs scored and six stolen bases.

Richardson started at first base and batted .294 with a double, a triple, two homers, 10 RBI and 18 runs, Martens batted .288 playing second base with three doubles, 10 RBI and 14 runs, and Brown batted .128 but with an on-base percentage of .314 to go with two doubles, seven RBI and 14 runs, mainly as a rightfielder and designated player.

Brewer did some pitching last year, finishing with a 4-2 win-loss record and a 3.05 earned run average in 43 2/3 innings pitched over nine games. She struck out 44 while walking 10.

Brown saw a limited amount of time in the circle as well. She made five appearances, working 6 1/3 innings with a 6.63 ERA and a 0-1 record to go with 10 strikeouts and nine walks.

“We return Brynli Brewer and Sunshine Brown on the mound, and we’re looking for them to be strong in the circle this year,” Bays said.

Brewer and Brown will more than likely be sharing duties at shortstop, depending on who is pitching. After that, all bets are off as to who will be where.

We will move several players up from last year’s JV (junior varsity) who we believe can make an impact for us this season,” Bays said. “Final decisions will be made once we’ve had the chance to get everyone on the field. We’ll use our upcoming scrimmages and the **Pee Dee Pitch-Off** (March 5-7 in Florence) to evaluate the group and determine which players will remain on varsity.

“This is a talented team, a talented group of girls.” Bays is looking forward to the process.

“It will be a little more difficult,” Bays said. “These girls will have to be coached up a little bit more, but I’m looking forward to it. That’s what we’re here for.”

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SCISA Girls Basketball Feature

SCISA girls basketball races taking shape this winter

By: Gerald Doolittle
Goose Creek, S.C. - At this writing on January 15, 2026 the SCISA Girls basketball races are taking shape in all classifications.

In **Class 4-A** can **Trinity Collegiate** (2-5) defend their title? Can last season’s runners-up **First Baptist** (15-8) make it to the finals again?

At this writing the top five teams in order are **Northwood Academy** (17-1), **First Baptist** (15-8), **Ben Lippen** (13-6), **Hammond** (10-3) and **Wilson Hall** (11-4).

In **Class 3-A** can **Pee Dee Academy** (4-5) defend their title? Can last season’s runners-up **Orangeburg Prep** (10-3) make it to the finals again?

At this writing the top five teams in order are **Florence Christian** (10-2), **Orangeburg Prep** (10-3), **Greenwood Christian** (5-3), **Patrick Henry Academy** (6-5) and **St. Johns Christian** (8-7).

In **Class 2-A** can **Cross Schools** (12-4) defend their title? Can last season’s runners-up **Laurens Academy** (15-1) make it to the finals again?

At this writing the top five teams in order are **Laurens Academy** (15-1), **Cross Schools** (12-4), **Dorchester Academy** (10-2), **King’s Academy** (9-5) and **Lee Academy** (6-4).

In **Class 1-A** can **Curtis Baptist** (7-3) defend their title? Can last season’s runners-up **Wardlaw Academy** (5-3) make it to the finals again?

At this writing the top five teams in order are **Curtis Baptist** (7-3), **Wardlaw Academy** (5-3), **Jefferson Davis Academy** (4-2), **Richard Winn Academy** (4-6) and **Holly Hill Academy** (4-8).

The top point makers so far this season are **Ryan Mayers** (Cross) 335, **Maliyah Birch** (Northwood) 329, **Jada Bates** (Northwood) 279, **Audrey Wadford** (Williamsburg) 236, **Maddie Coker** (Northside Christian) 209 and **Kylie Finley** (St. Johns Christian) 205.

Other leaders are **Maci Butler** (Curtis Baptist) 196, **Dakota Jenkins** (Heathwood Hall) 190, **Kaleigh Howell** (Northside Christian)



Last year, the Curtis Baptist girls captured the SCISA A crown



The Pee Dee Academy girls won the SCISA AAA crown last season



Trinity Collegiate captured the SCISA AAAA girls title last season

184, **Milly Kate Prescott** (Holly Hill Academy) 153, **Hadassah Moore** (Spartanburg Christian) 146, **Emerson Poston** (Florence Christian) 144, **Queseya Rhooms** (Heathwood Hall) 137, **Kate Pagan** (Hilton Head

Prep) 135, **Karagan Milton** (Lee Academy) 107, **Emma Hudgens** (Greenwood Christian) 100, **Audrey Fredere** (Greenwood Christian) 100.

AAAA Basketball Polls
1. Northwood Academy
2. First Baptist
3. Ben Lippen
4. Hammond
5. Wilson Hall

AAA Basketball Polls
1. Orangeburg Prep
2. Florence Christian
3. Greenwood Christian
4. Patrick Henry
5. St. Johns Christian

AA Basketball Polls
1. Laurens Academy
2. Cross Schools
3. Dorchester Academy
4. Kings Academy
5. Lee Academy

Class A Basketball Polls
1. Curtis Baptist
2. Wardlaw Academy
3. Jefferson Davis Academy
4. Richard Winn Academy
5. Holly Hill Academy

SCMat.com Wrestling Rankings

5A Division 1	AAAA	AA-A
1. James Island	1. Travelers Rest	1. Chester
2. Clover	2. May River	2. Chesnee
3. Stratford	3. South Pointe	3. Liberty
4. Summerville	4. Fountain Inn	4. Ninety-Six
5. Carolina Forest	5. Daniel	5. Clinton
6. Ashley Ridge	6. Westside	6. Buford
7. Byrnes	7. Laurens	7. Dixie
8. Rock Hill	8. Aiken	8. Bamberg-Ehrhardt
9. Blythewood	9. Hartsville	9. Edisto
10. Fort Dorchester	10. North Augusta	10. High Point Academy
11. Boiling Springs	11. York	11. Pelion
12. Dorman	12. Greer	12. Marion
13. Mauldin	13. Bluffton	13. Timberland
14. Lexington	14. Hilton Head	14. Cheraw
15. Wando	15. Beaufort	15. Bridges Prep
16. River Bluff	16. Dreher	16. Military Magnet
17. Cane Bay	17. Gilbert	17. Philip Simmons
18. Spartanburg	18. AC Flora	18. Academic Magnet
19. Wade Hampton	19. South Aiken	19. ALA-Lexington
20. Dutch Fork	20. Darlington	20. Carvers Bay
5A Division 2	AAA	GIRLS
1. Fort Mill	1. West-Oak	1. Rock Hill
2. Lugoff-Elgin	2. Palmetto	2. Greenwood
3. Eastside	3. Aynor	3. River Bluff
4. St. James	4. Powdersville	4. Blythewood
5. Greenwood	5. Broome	5. Chester
6. Catawba Ridge	6. Belton-Honea Path	6. Northwestern
7. Hillcrest	7. Union County	7. Chesnee
8. TL Hanna	8. Crescent	8. Boiling Springs
9. Chapin	9. Woodruff	9. Byrnes
10. Nation Ford	10. Battery Creek	10. White Knoll
11. Woodmont	11. Waccamaw	11. South Florence
12. Indian Land	12. Hanahan	12. Crescent
13. Gaffney	13. Swansea	13. Cane Bay
14. White Knoll	14. Loris	14. Gilbert
15. Lucy Beckham	15. Walhalla	15. Sumter
16. Northwestern	16. Marlboro County	16. South Pointe
17. Goose Creek	17. Chapman	17. Wando
18. Berkeley	18. Christ Church	18. Hilton Head
19. Socastee	19. Keenan	19. Marlboro County
20. Myrtle Beach	20. Pendleton	20. Stratford

Panthers have experience on the hardwood

By Roger Lee
Special to the HSSR
Summerville – If things continue the way they have, 2026 may just be the **Pinewood Prep Boys’** year.

The **Panthers** went 5-0 on the hardwood the first 18 days of January to improve to 18-5 on the season with a 3-0 mark in **SCISA 4A, Region 2**. The team has talent, size and good basketball IQ. “Our five starters played a whole season together last year so we know what everybody is capable of doing so hopefully we will continue putting them in the spots for them to do that,” said Pinewood coach **Pat Eidson**. “We are a very veteran team with a lot of game experience. I would put our top five up against any team in the state and believe we would have a chance for a win.”

Lately the Panthers have played a tough schedule that includes some 5A **South Carolina High School League** teams. Last season, they advanced all the way to the SCISA state semifinals before being eliminated by **Augusta Christian** with a 23-8 record.

Senior point guard **Jonathan Slawson**, senior guard **Jayden Alexander**, junior power forward **Kias Parris**, junior small forward **Tre Green** and junior center **Tripp Eidson** all returned to the team’s starting lineup for another campaign. Parris, Slawson and Eidson are the team captains.

“I am really excited about my senior point guard, Jonathan Slawson,” Coach Eidson said. “This is his third year running our team and I sense a real determination in him to have a great senior season. Jayden Alexander is coming off a fantastic season as a wide receiver on our football team and he brings that athleticism and toughness to our team. Our juniors returning from last year have all physically matured and are playing at a much higher level.”

Green led the team in scoring last season, averaging 15 points per game. Alexander averaged



Photo by Roger Lee
Pinewood senior Jonathan Slawson is a highly rated point guard.

10.5 points and Parris averaged 10.3. Slawson led in assists, averaging 4.1 per game. Parris averaged 3.9 assists and Alexander averaged 2.2.

Eidson led the Panthers in rebounds (7.9 per game) and blocks (2.3 per game). Parris averaged 7.6 rebounds and 1.5 blocks and Green averaged 5.8 rebounds. Slawson led in steals with 2.9 per game. Alexander averaged 2.7 steals and Parris 2.3.

Senior **Bralon Blackwell** and junior **Heyward Moore** are also seeing a lot time on the floor. Freshman **Caleb Fernandez** and juniors **K.J. Robinson** and **Graham Gilmer** have shown promise and are working to get more playing time.

Slawson is highly rated among the state’s point guards while Green, Parris and Eidson are regarded as three of the best juniors in the state.

Green is currently leading the Panthers scorers, averaging 20.7 per game. Parris averages 17.3 per

First Baptist showing great fight this winter

By David Shelton
Senior Writer
James Island – **First Baptist** boys basketball coach **Antoine Saunders** is having a blast coaching his 2025-26 squad, enjoying the fight and determination his team is showing.

The Hurricanes sit at 11-8 overall after a win over Northwood Academy on Jan. 16. That record comes against a very competitive non-region schedule in which the Hurricanes played several larger public schools, including Summerville, Ashley Ridge (twice), Berkeley, James Island and Carolina Forest.

“It’s been a tough schedule but I love the way this team has battled and fought their way through it,” Saunders said. “It definitely has made us a tougher team and it has helped us get better. The guys have embraced the schedule and they haven’t backed down. It’s a fun team to coach because of their effort. They come to practice everyday and that carries over to the games.”

First Baptist contended for a state championship a couple of seasons before a rebuilding year last season. Saunders had several players return from that team and the offseason work was beneficial. He says this team has potential to get back to contending.

“The thing is we don’t have size and our margin for error is very small,” he said. “We shoot the ball fairly well but we have to do all of the little things right to keep us competitive. Playing scrappy and with effort helps. They are gelling and gaining confidence so we’ll show up and see what happens.”

The Hurricanes show good balance offensively with senior guard **James Pojani** leading the team in scoring at about 14 points per game. Senior **Thomas Doyle** senior **Jordan Aremu** are returning starters as well. **Aiden Walker**, a transfer from Woodland, has made a positive impact and junior **William Rose** also is a starter.

Matthew Roof and **Ulysses Compton** are the only other seniors on the roster. Juniors in-

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game and Slawson 11.2. Slawson leads in assists with 6.2 per game, followed by Green (2.9) and Parris (2.7).

Eidson leads in rebounds with 10.6 per game as well as in blocks with 3.8 per game. Parris averages 8.7 rebounds and 1.7 blocks while Green averages 5.1 rebounds.

Some of Pinewood’s more notable wins came over **South Wake** out of **North Carolina, Summerville, Hammond, Lucy Beckham, Conway, First Baptist School** and **Porter-Gaud**. The Panthers have two key region games coming up as they host **Northwood Academy** Jan. 23 and **First Baptist School** Jan. 30.

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clude **Demarcus Vinson, Pierre Louis** and **Tyrell Gadsden**. Rounding out the roster are sophomores **Andrew Sanders, Trey Taylor** and **Darnell Gadsden**.

First Baptist has a tough road in region play as well. Porter-Gaud is the defending state champion and Pinewood Prep is the favorite to win the state title this season. The Hurricanes lost by four to Pinewood in their first meeting and have Porter-Gaud twice down the stretch.

“It’s not easy in this conference, that’s for sure,” Saunders said. “You better come to play against any team in our region.”

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HEATHWOOD HALL

Home of the Highlanders

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 we are now.

“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 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 lead these guys.”

The team was led on offense by senior quarterback **Patrick Belk**. Belk completed 165-of-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.

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 McKinley** (56-756-3 TD’s), senior **Jamonie Batts** (37-539-4 TD’s), senior **Jackson Noble** (20-318-4 TD’s) along with senior **Charlie 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 up-front 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 7-of-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 **Heyward 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



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seven seniors on offense and four seniors on defense. They are expected to return five starters on offense for the ’26 season 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-state honors.

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.

SCMat.com Wrestling Rankings (Individual)

AAAAA	3. Hunter Cring - Daniel (Jr., 2025 120 SQ)
106 lbs. 1. Jessiah Rockeymore - Rock Hill (Jr.) 2. Jacob McClure - Catawba Ridge (So., 2025 113 SQ) 3. Jackson Scanlon - TL Hanna (Jr., 2025 106 SQ)	126 lbs. 1. Bryce Stephenson - Hilton Head (Sr., 2025 113 1st, 2024 106 3rd) 2. Alex Mestas - South Pointe (Jr., 2025 120 1st) 3. Tim Simmons - Travelers Rest (Sr., 2025 113 2nd)
113 lbs. 1. Jake Strickland - Hillcrest (So., 2025 106 1st) 2. Beckham Boggess - Clover (Jr., 2025 106 4th) 3. Morrison Murphy - Fort Mill (So.)	132 lbs. 1. Noah Lynch - Hartsville (Fr.) 2. Bryan Davis, Jr. - Aiken (Sr., 2025 126 1st, 2024 120 4th) 3. Marcus Foulk - May River (Sr., 2025 120 3rd, 2024 113 SQ)
120 lbs. 1. Drayton Johnson - Eastside (Jr., 2025 120 3rd - 5A, 2024 113 3rd - 4A) 2. Levi Wheeler - North Myrtle Beach (Sr., 2025 113 2nd - 5A, 2024 120 SQ - 4A) 3. Joseph Britt - Carolina Forest (Jr., 2025 106 2nd)	138 lbs. 1. Eli Anstey - South Pointe (Sr., 2025 132 2nd) 2. Cameron Adkins - York (So., 2025 132 SQ) 3. Mikale Lynch - Hartsville (So., 2025 126 3rd)
126 lbs. 1. Montero Royal - Goose Creek (Jr., 2025 113 1st, 2024 106 1st) 2. Jordyn White - Berkeley (Sr., 2025 120 4th, 2024 113 SQ) 3. Peter Vapori - River Bluff (Sr., 2025 120 SQ, 2024 106 SQ)	144 lbs. 1. Jackson McLees - Travelers Rest (Jr., 2025 126 4th - 4A, 2024 106 4th - 3A) 2. Cole Sowers - Hilton Head (So., 2025 126 SQ) 3. Jack Carnes - Fountain Inn (Sr., 2025 144 SQ)
132 lbs. 1. Jackson Stocker - Dutch Fork (Sr., 2024 113 2nd, 2023 106 2nd) 2. Thomas Hutchinson - Rock Hill (Sr., 2025 126 SQ) 3. Aidan Surratt - Boiling Springs (Sr., 2025 132 4th)	150 lbs. 1. Ayden Hicks - Travelers Rest (Sr., 2025 132 4th) 2. Thomas Brough - May River (Sr., 2025 138 3rd) 3. Jason Blackmon - York (Sr., 2025 144 4th)
138 lbs. 1. Gianni Bottone - Lucy Beckham (Sr., 2025 132 1st - 5A, 2024 126 1st, 2023 120 2nd - 4A) 2. Tyler Mindala - St. James (Sr., 2025 126 3rd, 2024 120 3rd, 2023 106 SQ) 3. Billy Williams - Greenwood (Jr., 2025 126 SQ)	157 lbs. 1. Blake Butler - May River (Sr., 2025 150 1st - SC 4A, 2024 150 3rd - Class 5 VA) 2. De’Onta Watson - South Pointe (Jr., 2025 157 2nd, 2024 157 4th) 3. William Jenkins - Travelers Rest (Jr., 2025 150 3rd)
144 lbs. 1. Xavier Gonzalez - Clover (Jr., 2025 132 SQ) 2. Kayden Fogarty - Indian Land (Sr., 2025 138 3rd - 5A, 2024 132 3rd, 2023 120 SQ - 4A) 3. Matt Spignardo - Lucy Beckham (Sr., 2025 138 2nd - 2A-1A, 2024 138 SQ, 2023 126 3rd - 3A)	165 lbs. 1. John Grove - AC Flora (Sr., 2025 165 2nd - 4A, 2024 157 1st, 2023 145 1st, 2021 106 1st - SCISA) 2. Daelyn Esaw - Wilson (Sr., 2025 165 3rd) 3. Landon Smith - Greer (Sr., 2025 165 4th)
150 lbs. 1. Max Johnson - James Island (Jr., 2025 132 3rd - 5A, 2024 120 2nd - 4A) 2. Lincoln Greene - Fort Mill (Sr., 2025 138 2nd, 2024 120 3rd, 2023 106 4th) 3. Jonah Coleman - Stratford (Jr., 2025 138 SQ - 5A, 2024 126 1st - SCISA)	175 lbs. 1. Malik McLaurin - Aiken (Sr., 2025 175 2nd) 2. Gabriel Dolquest - Wren (Jr., 2025 190 SQ) 3. Chris Aguirre - Pickens (Sr., 2025 165 SQ)
157 lbs. 1. Preston Crone - Carolina Forest (Sr., 2025 150 3rd, 2024 144 3rd) 2. Reid Whitesell - Rock Hill (Jr., 2025 144 SQ) 3. Mark Evans - Hillcrest (So., 2025 144 SQ)	190 lbs. 1. Landon Bledsoe - Fountain Inn (Sr., 2025 190 4th - 4A, 2024 175 SQ, 2023 182 SQ - 3A) 2. KJ Burg - South Pointe (Jr., 2024 165 4th) 3. Henry Santiz - May River (So., 2025 165 SQ)
165 lbs. 1. Peyton Schrader - Eastside (Sr., 2024 157 1st, 2023 126 1st - 4A) 2. Tanner Merta - Stratford (Sr., 2025 150 2nd) 3. Josh Brown - Carolina Forest (Sr., 2025 144 4th)	215 lbs. 1. Jarrett Clinkscales - Westside (Sr., 2025 215 1st) 2. Colton Freeman - Beaufort (Jr., 2025 190 2nd - 4A, 2023 182 1st - SCISA) 3. John Burke - North Augusta (Sr., 2025 215 SQ)
175 lbs. 1. Nathan Rose - St. James (Sr., 2025 144 3rd, 2024 132 2nd, 2023 113 SQ) 2. Hank Lee - Eastside (Sr., 2025 144 SQ - 5A, 2024 175 3rd, 2023 138 2nd - 4A) 3. Joey Darling - Wando (Sr., 2025 175 SQ)	285 lbs. 1. Sean Tiedman - Midland Valley (Sr., 2025 285 3rd) 2. Malik Moore - Darlington (Sr., 2025 285 SQ) 3. Noah Robertson - Travelers Rest (Jr., 2025 285 SQ)
190 lbs. 1. Logan Hinton - Lugoff-Elgin (Jr., 2025 190 3rd - 5A, 2024 175 SQ - 4A) 2. Copeland Grooms - James Island (Sr., 2025 165 3rd - 5A, 2024 157 3rd - 4A) 3. Jack Solinger - Wando (Sr., 2025 190 SQ)	AAA
215 lbs. 1. Trey Robinson - Rock Hill (Jr., 2025 190 1st, 2024 190 3rd) 2. Landon Jackson - Berkeley (Sr., 2025 215 2nd, 2024 215 4th) 3. Zion Johnson - Westwood (Sr., 2025 215 SQ - 5A, 2024 215 4th, 2023 220 SQ - 4A)	106 lbs. 1. Jamaine Brown - Belton-Honea Path (Fr.) 2. Drew Whiteside - Palmetto (Sr., 2025 106 2nd) 3. Andrew Avery - Hanahan (So., 2025 106 SQ)
285 lbs. 1. Jeremy Galloway - Blythewood (Sr., 2025 285 SQ) 2. Alex Johnson - Catawba Ridge (Jr., 2025 215 4th - 5A, 2024 215 SQ - 4A) 3. Malachi Miles - TL Hanna (Sr.)	113 lbs. 1. Eddy Yambao - Hanahan (Sr., 2025 120 SQ) 2. Cayden Duncan - Palmetto (Sr.) 3. Dylan Bray - Powdersville (Jr., 2025 106 SQ)
AAAA	120 lbs. 1. Gunner Mease - West-Oak (Jr., 2025 106 1st) 2. Luke Gray - Crescent (Jr., 2025 120 2nd) 3. Steele Kidder - Loris (Sr., 2025 113 2nd, 2024 106 SQ, 2023 106 SQ)
106 lbs. 1. Stephano Caderlon - May River (So., 2025 106 3rd) 2. Franco Pressley - Dreher (Jr., 2025 113 4th - 4A, 2024 106 SQ - 3A) 3. Crisley Martin - Laurens (Jr., 2025 106 SQ)	126 lbs. 1. Noah Justice - Loris (Jr., 2025 120 1st) 2. James Gray - Crescent (Jr., 2025 126 3rd, 2024 113 2nd) 3. Peyton Durham - West-Oak (Sr., 2025 120 3rd, 2024 106 1st)
113 lbs. 1. Stiles Stevens - Travelers Rest (So., 2025 106 1st) 2. Lucas Means - South Pointe (So., 2025 106 SQ) 3. Bryce Butler - May River (Fr.)	132 lbs. 1. A.J. DeLaCruz - West-Oak (Sr., 2025 132 1st, 2024 126 3rd, 2023 106 1st) 2. Kayden Alford - Loris (Sr., 2025 126 2nd, 2023 113 SQ) 3. C.J. Smith - Woodruff (Sr., 2025 126 SQ, 2024 113 3rd)
120 lbs. 1. Isaiah Simmons - Travelers Rest (Jr., 2025 106 2nd) 2. Ryan Seman - May River (Jr., 2025 113 SQ, 2024 106 SQ)	138 lbs. 1. Efrain Rivera - West-Oak (Jr., 2025 120 2nd - Polk County, NC 1A) 2. Owen Miller - Hanahan (So., 2025 126 4th) 3. Noah Tucker - Union County (So., 2025 138 SQ)

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Spartanburg

DAY SCHOOL

Home of the Griffins

Inside look at varsity football at Spartanburg Day through the eyes of player Charles Wilson

By Billy G. Baker
Publisher
Spartanburg—“*The High School Sports Report*” has been tracking the progress made over the past two years as the **Spartanburg Day School** transitioned from a “B” team football program in 2024; to a junior varsity program in 2025, and in just eight month the Griffins will be become a varsity program competing as a member of SCISA.

After the team went 3-3 as a middle school program in 2024, Football Program Head **Patrick Moffitt** said, “It was exciting to watch the growth and development of every one of the football players in the program this past fall. Their hunger to learn and compete is what made this past season a success. I can’t wait to continue to build with them every step of the way as we continue to grow.”

Spartanburg Day Head of School, **Dave Skeen** added these comments, after the team completed the 2024 middle school season with three wins. The team defeated **St Joseph’s Catholic** twice, and **Southside Christian** to get things started in a positive direction. “We are very excited about the path to varsity football we have set out to develop, and we are excited to see it coming to fruition,” said Skeen. “We have a great teacher-coach in **Patrick Moffitt** and are excited to be offering this type of educational experience in a school that demands a lot of its student-athletes through our rigorous academic programs.”

One key football player at SDS, who has been in the building process to reinstate varsity football, after a 41-year absence, is rising sophomore **Charles Wilson** (5-8,150). Through his eyes one can sense the excitement and anticipation building towards that historic moment, once the 2026 varsity season kicks-off this August for the Griffins.

“It is definitely exciting knowing that all the hard work and preparation over the past two seasons have prepared us to start a varsity program this season,” said Wilson. “It is really neat to be a part of something historic and challenging at the same time.

“I started school at Spartanburg Day in the second-grade and I was excited to hear about my school starting with a football program two years ago,” said Wilson, who was a tight end/linebacker on the middle school team in 2024. “I became a wide receiver but stayed at linebacker for the junior varsity season and like playing both positions.”

Way will certainly never forget the four touchdown passes he caught in a game against **Christ Church** this past season. Two years ago, Wilson ran back a kick-off 77 yards for a touchdown that helped his team record a



Charles Wilson

win over **Blacksburg**.
“I run hard after every possession because I have a desire to score,” said Wilson. “I give 100 per cent on every play.”

Wilson gives much credit to Coach Moffitt, and the staff at SDS, for their patience in teaching the fundamentals to himself, and numerous players who were participating in football for the first time in their lives as 6th and 7th graders. “Coach Moffitt and his staff were very patient with so many young players when we started out with the middle school program,” said Wilson. “They did a wonderful job of teaching us the fundamentals of football with a focus towards the sport being a team game with everyone focused on doing their assignments on each and every play.”

Coach Moffitt calls Wilson the “glue player” of the Griffins emerging varsity football program. “On my very first day on the job Wilson came to meet me and he told me how excited he was that the school was starting a football program and how anxious he was to get started helping to build a team,” said Coach Moffitt. “He is a special kid and a great team leader.”

At the conclusion of the junior varsity season in the fall, Coach Moffitt told the *HSSR*, “We are very pleased with the progress we’ve made as a program the past two years,” he said. “If you would have told me after the first day of practice back in 2024 that we would have accomplished some of the things we have so far, I would not have believed you.

“The progress and development of each and every player in the program has been amazing to watch,” said Coach Moffitt. The way they have bought into the program is truly special, and if they continue to keep the



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

same mind-set, I think they will have a very memorable next few years of varsity football together.”

There are currently around 29 varsity football candidates in the Griffin football program, and they are lifting weights three days per week, plus doing conditioning.

“Our challenge is to play with a lot of confidence this upcoming season and not be intimidated about not having many juniors and seniors on the team,” said Coach Moffitt. “We have to be ready to meet the challenge as both players and coaches, so we need to put a lot of work now to get ready for the challenges ahead.”

Coach Moffitt was a college quarterback at **Williams College** in Massachusetts where he graduated in 2011. During his four-year career, his team was 20-4. After his senior season he won the *Golden Helmet Award* in New England for all Div. II and III players in the region.

Coach Moffitt came to Spartanburg Day from the St. Andrews School in Delaware. When he took over the football program at St. Andrews in 2015, the school had only 21 varsity players and they had not the playoffs in a number of years. When he left the program, after the 2023 season, to come to the Spartanburg Day School, his team had 49 varsity players, and they were consistently in the play-offs.

Coach Moffitt is assisted by **Chris Cornier**, **Andrew Vaught**, and **Justin Crain**.

“Andrew is a **Wofford** graduate where he was an outstanding offensive lineman,” said Coach Moffitt. “He has helped transform both our offensive and defensive lines and this will be one of the strengths of our team this upcoming season.

“Chris is our defensive coordinator, and he works with defensive backs and wide receivers also,” said Coach Moffitt. “This past season Justin worked with the offensive line and defensive line also along with the running backs.”

Coach Moffitt said he is looking to add two more assistants before the start of Spring drills this May. He indicated one more assistant is needed to work on offense focused on coaching running backs while on defense he will be seeking a coach to focus on developing linebackers. Coach Moffitt will coach quarterbacks, linebacker and serve as the team’s play caller.

Meanwhile, the boys’ team is currently 3-7 following a 58-40 loss to Asheville **School** on January 16.

The team is head coached by first year head coach **Caleb Jordan** who was a four-year starter on his college team at **Roanoke College** in Virginia.

Tri-captains are leading the boys’ team. Senior SG **Thomas Hyde** is the sparkplug of the team averaging around 12 points a game. The other captains are junior combo guard **Gabe Smith** and senior guard/forward **Brice Henderson** who is averaging around 10 points a game.

Both teams play the exact schedule to close out the regular season starting with a home game against **Greenwood Christin** on January 27.



LAKE VIEW

Wild Gators



Lake View basketball teams in rebuilding mode

By David Shelton
Senior Writer
Lake View – The first two-thirds of the 2025-26 basketball season has been a difficult ride for the boys and girls basketball teams at **Lake View High**, but both teams look to finish strong and earn a berth in the Class A state playoffs.

The girls program won the Class A state championship two seasons ago but managed just five wins last season. Prior to last season, the program had a five-year run as state title contenders, posting a 102-14 record.

This season has been somewhat of a struggle as well for coach **Larry Inman** and the team. Through January 16, the girls team was 3-4 overall and 1-2 in region play.

The team’s top player is junior wing **Zy’Kyra Waters**, who was a starter on the state championship team as a freshman and has been a double digit scorer in each of the last two seasons, as well as this year.

With no jayvee program, Inman keeps a group of underclassmen every year but many only get valuable practice time while the more experienced and older players see most of the game action. The seniors on this year’s roster are forward **Desiree Dawkins**, guard **Shayla Johnson** and forward **Kirsten McMillan**. Waters is the lone junior on the team this winter.

Sophomores include guard **Aura Green** and forward **Ny’Kya Jones**. Freshmen players are guard **Sophia Rogers**, forward **Alivia Mitchell**, and guard **Summer Reaves**. Rounding out the team are eighth-graders guard **Sarah Bethea**, center **Kloye Davis** and point guard **Callie Smith**; and seventh-graders **Layla Coleman** (guard) and forward **Leah Page**.

The remaining schedule is Green Sea Floyds (Jan. 20), Hemingway (Jan. 23), Latta (Jan. 27), Carver’s Bay (Jan. 30), Johnsonville (Feb. 3), Green Sea Floyds (Feb. 6), Hannah-Pamplico (Feb. 9) and East Clarendon (Feb. 12).

The boys team is in major rebuilding mode as coach **Jeff Caesar** has a young roster that is trying to compete in a very tough region. The Wild Gators were 0-18 last season and have lost their first 10 games of this season, three by single digits. The team is more competitive overall.

“We will compete better this year and next year we should be pretty good,” the coach said. “This team will grow as the season progresses.”

Lake View will start just one senior, guard **Landon King**. King is the most complete



Junior Zy’Kyra Waters is a dependable team leader for the Lady Wild Gators

player on the team, averaging 8.1 points, 5.7 rebounds and 2.5 steals per game. Junior forwards **Terrence Alford** and **Cameron Wheeler** are expected to carry some of the offensive load. Alford averages 5.5 points and 5.2 rebounds while Wheeler averages 7.5 points and 7.8 boards per game.

Junior **Ammiel Rowland** will start at guard and junior **Jalen Clarke** will direct the action as the point guard.

Caesar says the addition of King and fellow senior **Bryce King** (6.0 ppg) 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**.

Caesar 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.”

The remaining schedule is Green Sea Floyds (Jan. 20), Hemingway (Jan. 23), Latta (Jan. 27), Carver’s Bay (Jan. 30), Johnsonville (Feb. 3), Green Sea Floyds (Feb. 6), Hannah-Pamplico (Feb. 9) and East Clarendon (Feb. 12).




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Spartanburg Day basketball teams focused on making playoffs

Billy G. Baker
Publisher
Spartanburg—As of mid-January, both the **Spartanburg Day** girl’s and boys’ basketball teams were experiencing rebuilding seasons with young teams but strong finishes to the season could still land them with playoff opportunities.

Elizabeth Konradi, who enjoyed a successful college career at the **University of the South**, after a stellar high school career in Dallas, is the head coach of the Lady Griffins (2-6).

“In our most recent game we won by 5 (beat **Westminster Catawba Christian** 37-32) in a competitive atmosphere so the team is improving with every game we play,” said Coach Konradi. “We have been spending more time in the weight room lately and we are also play-

ing with more focus and attention to detail.”

The team has three players averaging between 9 and 10 points a game in balanced scoring. They are led by junior SG **Katelyn Bopp** at 10.3 points and 4.8 rebounds a game. Senior SG **Aiala Diez** and freshman PG **Maren Diez** each are averaging 9.3 points a game. Aiala is also averaging 3.3 assists and 3.3 steals a game.

Other starters for the girls’ team include 8th grader Dorothy Dobson who is averaging 4.4 points and 4.4 rebounds a game. Freshman Clara Matz is the 5th starter, and she is averaging 4.6 points and 2.9 rebounds an outing.

“As we start region play, we hope to continue to find success but my main objective, in this first season, is to get everyone involved and to build a solid program for the future,” said Coach Konradi.



BARNWELL

Warhorses



Barnwell wrestling making strides under Cooper

By Billy G. Baker
Publisher
Barnwell—Four years ago **Barnwell High School** reinstated the Warhorse wrestling program, and **Isaac Cooper** has been the head coach in the program for three seasons.

Cooper also serves as the defensive coordinator for the Barnwell football team and six football players are also members of the wrestling team.

Coach Cooper was an outstanding wrestler for three years at **Laurens High** where he graduated in 2011. He helped the Raiders win a region wrestling title his senior year when he wrestled in the 171- pound weight class.

“Wrestling is a great cross-over sport for football players because it helps develop mental toughness,” said Coach Cooper. “You have to work at developing moves and techniques and it is you versus someone else on the matt and you are always working hard to improve.”

Coach Cooper talked about the difference in being a football player versus being a wrestler. “In all honesty, it is more difficult to become an accomplished wrestler because the competition is very intense, contested over a shorter period, and wrestling requires that you learn a lot more moves and techniques. It is you versus one other person also.

“Wrestling is both a team sport and an individual sport,” said Coach Cooper. “A coach and a player must devote time to understanding some of the complex rules you must understand to be a successful wrestler on the matt.”

The wrestling program at Barnwell is still merging and many of the 14 weight classes are open this season with no participation. Weight classes start at 106 pounds and continue upwards all the way to the 285- pound heavy weight class.

This year’s wrestling team has around eleven wrestlers competing in weight classes of 120,126, 138, 150, 157, 215, and heavy weight.

Barnwell girls basketball focused on playoff run

From Staff Reports
Barnwell—With their 40-32 region win over **Edisto** on January, 16 the Lady Warhorses have pulled into a tie with **Hampton County** (2-2) for the region lead going into the home stretch of the regular season.

Junior guard **Savannah Rountree** scored 12 points and senior guard **Gabrielle Thomas** added 10 points to lead the Lady Warhorses to the win. Sophomore center **Bre’Yanna Bostick** chipped in six points against Edisto also.

Others contributing points in the Edisto game for Barnwell included freshman guard **Za’Cariah Devoe** (3), senior guard **Aurielle Sanders** (2), freshman forward **Kennide Williams** (2), freshman guard **Zamari Williams** (2), and junior wing **Gracie Carter** (1).

“We are playing much better defense now,” said head coach **William Hammonds**. “We still need to find ways to score but our defense is coming along well.

The strength of the team is built around three senior heavy weight performers who serve as tri-captains of the team. First- year team member **Jackson Bedingfield** has taken up the sport quickly and he has a 3-1 record in competition this season. Beddingfield was a two-way lineman on the football team this season and he earned *North-South* all-star honors after the season.

Senior heavy-weights **Tagan Youngblood** and **Zahnarie Garrett** each have one win in competition this season.

Junior **Braxton Beasley** performed well in the 215-pound weight class with a 5-2 record.

The majority of the other weight classes are occupied by first year competitors working hard to hone their skills on the matt. **Marley Kren** is in her first season competing in the 120-pound weight class. Senior **Cage Blume** is his second season competing in the 126-pound weight class. Catherine Floor is in her first year competing in the 138-pouind weight category. Freshman Cameron Rivers recently got his first twin of the season in the 150-pound weight class in a match against **Pinewood Prep**.

The 157-pound weight class is shared by junior Josh Steele who has one win this season along with Justin Carrilo who also has one win on the season. The remaining weight class of 165 pounds is contested by freshman **Kenneth Odom**.

The team will tune up for the upcoming Region meet by competing in the Bamberg Invitational at Bamberg-Ehrhardt High School on January 17.

The team’s lone dual meet win this season came against **Holly Hill Academy**.

“My long- term goal with the wrestling program is to increase our numbers and works towards competing for region titles and making the state playoffs,” said Coach Cooper.

Coach Cooper is assisted by **Rod Roth** who also serves as the school’s adult athletic trainer.


“Rountree is shooting the ball really well and she is getting it going on offense for us,” said Coach Hammonds. “Both Bostick and Devoe are two of most improved players since the start of the season. Bostick is our top rebounder coming off the bench. “Gabby is starting to making better decisions on her passes from the point guard position,” said Coach Hammonds. “She is starting to make the right plays.”

Coach Hammonds that with six region games to play he is hoping his team can finish strong and place at least third in the region and then go on and play well in the playoffs. “Hampton County and Lake Marion have two really good teams this year but if we continue to improve, I feel like we can place at least third in the region.”

Maddie Brown is a 5-10 small forward and she is one of the team’s co-captains. Brown is a good rebounder and plays good defense in the paint.

Barnwell will host Hampton County on February, 3.


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To date, a shooting guard, Roudtree leads the team in scoring at 14 points a game. Thomas is at 5.8 points and three rebounds a game, including 2.4 steals. Bostick is averaging 3.6 points a game and leads the team in rebounding. Devoe is averaging 1.2 steals a game.

Coach Hammonds is assisted **Alicia Davis** and **April Robinson**.



2025-26 Carolina Academy Girls basketball

Carolina Academy hoops teams enter region play

By David Shelton
Senior Writer
Lake City – Basketball season has entered the final drive and the boys and girls teams at Carolina Academy are hoping to finish strong and earn play-off berths.

Both teams are under the .500 mark but have competed well. Each is capable of posting wins down the stretch if they can put it all together over the last four weeks of the season.

The boys team is more senior-laden than the girls team. In fact, the girls roster does not have any seniors or juniors on it.

Seniors on the boys team are **Cohen Filyaw**, **Walker McCutcheon**, **Cole Tanner**, **Lane Edwards**, **Hendley Campbell**, **Chandler Prosser** and **Ryan Cox**. The other two players are junior **Ryker Rhodes** and sophomore **Tanner Floyd**.

Making up the girls roster are sophomores **Emma Amos**, **Lauren Sims**, **Ella Ham**, **Ella**

Cumbie and **Sarah Garris**; and freshmen **Paisley McCutcheon**, **Natalie Braveboy**, **Kaylie Lyerly** and **Kiki Hanna**.

Amos is the team’s leading scorer, averaging about 13 points per game. Sims averages in double figures in rebounds and McCutcheon adds about 10 points per game.

Lyerly and Hanna were members of the state championship girls tennis team this past fall. Sims, Amos, McCutcheon, Braveboy and Ham were members of the volleyball team that made the state playoffs this past season.

The fall sports season was highlighted by a state championship in tennis, while the volleyball and football teams made the state playoffs as well.

The girls tennis team won their second straight SCISA Class AA state championship, defeating **Lowcountry Prep**, 6-0, to claim the top prize. Carolina Academy finished the season with a 12-4

See *Carolina Academy*, pg. 68

Lake City girls out to 10-5 start to season

By Dennis Brunson
hssr.com Associate Editor

Lake City – After a season in which it posted a 17-8 record, won the Region 7-AA title and reached the lower state championship game of the state play-offs, the 2025-26 campaign hasn’t had the same magic for the **Lake City High School** girls basketball team.

The Panthers opened with a 10-8 overall record and were 3-3 in region play. Second-year head coach **Shaquetta Cooper** said her team has been plagued by inconsistency.

“There have been times when our team has performed well,” Cooper said. “We’ve faced numerous setbacks. We have to get healthy.”

Leading the way for Lake City is freshman **Hannah Riles**. She leads the team in scoring with an 11.9 points-per-game average and in assists at 3.1 She is also averaging 2.9 steals and 3.8 rebounds.

Senior **Jada Robinson** leads the team in rebounding with a 9.1 average and in steals at 3.9. She is averaging 8.3 points. Senior **Trayana Burgess** is just missing averaging double figures in scoring with a 9.9 average to go with 2.9 steals.

Sophomore **Ja’Kyla Boyle** is averaging 5.8 rebounds to go with 2.6 points, freshman **Shaziyah Epps** is averaging 4.8 points, and senior **Kailey Graham** is averaging 3.3 points and 3.9 rebounds.

Other players who are seeing regular time in the playing rotation are eighth-grader **Ke’Osha Smith**, senior **Kierstyn Hanna** and junior **Brianna Shaw**.

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Williamsburg Academy STALLIONS

Williamsburg boys basketball coming along

By Dennis Brunson
hssr.com Associate Editor

Kingtree – The **Williamsburg Academy** boys basketball team got off to a pretty good start, winning six of its first 10 games. And when you hear how much time the Stallions got to spend together before starting their season, the record looks even more impressive.

“The state championship game was on Saturday,” Williamsburg head coach **Kevin Burrows** said in reference to the school’s football team beating **Colleton Prep Academy** 36-14 for the SCISA Class A state title on November 22. “Monday was our first game (a 55-46 loss to **Wilson Hall**), so we got to practice for a couple of hours on Sunday.

“We were banged up, but we played. We just got off to a late start. We’re getting to where need to be condition-wise and getting into basketball mode. The first two weeks were kind of rough.”

Six of the players on the 10-man roster were on the football team, and each has played a significant role in the early going. They are junior **Charlie Caulder**, senior **Micah Balder**, junior **Al Casselman**, junior **Marlin Morris**, junior **Sammy Tomlinson** and junior **Seth Cherinko**.

The leading scorer is junior **Ethan Jones**, who is averaging around 14 points a game. He is joined in the starting lineup by Caulder, Balder, Casselman and Morris.

Caulder was next in socirng with 10 points and a team leading 7.0 rebounds. Balder was averaging 8.0 points, a team high 5.0 assists and 4.0 rebounds, while Casselman was averaging 9.0 points and 4.0 steals. Morris was averaging 5.0 points and 6.5 rebounds.

The first two off the bench are freshman **Rylan Berry** and Tomlinson. Berry is the sixth man and was averaging around six points a game. Tomlinson, an offensive lineman on the football team, provides some size inside. He was averaging around four points and three rebounds a contest.

Cherinko was averaging three points and two steals. The other members of the team are junior **Wyatt Dennis** and junior **Isaiah Bui**.

Burrows admitted that the team’s early success has been a bit of a surprise even to him just because he knows how little practice time the team has actually had.

“Some teams have been together since mid-October,” Burrows said. “We didn’t get together until the middle of November. There were a few games

where we were just feeling our way. We had guys who were still banged up from football, and we had a few games slip by us we probably could have won.

“We’re having to get into basketball shape. Basketball is a game where you have to play on both sides of the court. I think we’ll get better and get stronger as the season goes on, both mentally and physically.”

Williamsburg plays in a strong region in Region 3-AAA. The other four teams are defending state runner-up **Pee Dee Academy**, **Christian Academy** of **Myrtle Beach**, which played for a state title two seasons ago, **Florence Christian School** and **Dillon Christian School**. Despite that, the Stallions have some lofty goals.

“We want to at least be in the region final,” Burrows said. “We want to win the region and hopefully get into the playoffs. We feel like that’s a realistic goal.”

WILLIAMSBURG GIRLS START 4-9

The Williamsburg girls basketball team won four of its first 13 games. In the early going of the schedule, senior **Audrey Wadford** was leading the way with a 19.3 scoring average.

Junior **Perry Wise** was averaging 6.3, sophomore **Abby Ward** at 5.7, eighth-grader **Corrine Kellahan** was averaging 4.4, and sophomore **Maggie Jones** was averaging 3.0.

Other members of the team are senior **Sophie Kellahan**, junior **Shay Carraway**, junior **Blakely Hundley**, sophomore **Aleeya Reed**, freshman **Sophia Jacobs** and freshman **Avery Belue**.

BASEBALL, SOFTBALL UNDER NEW LEADERSHIP

Britton Morris and **Jada Cox** are a little over a month away from coaching their first games as the respective baseball and softball head coaches for Williamsburg.

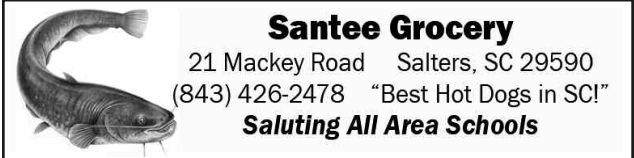
Williamsburg will open both seasons on February 24 at home against **Calhoun Academy**.

Morris takes over for **Tyler Boyd**, who was the Stallions head coach for 10 years, leading them to a state title in 2022. Morris had been hired to be the junior varsity head coach after having graduated from **Columbia International University** where he

See **Williamsburg**, pg. 71



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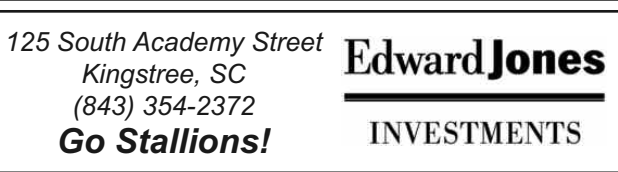
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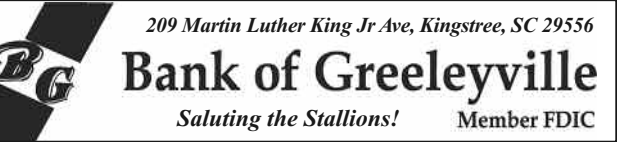
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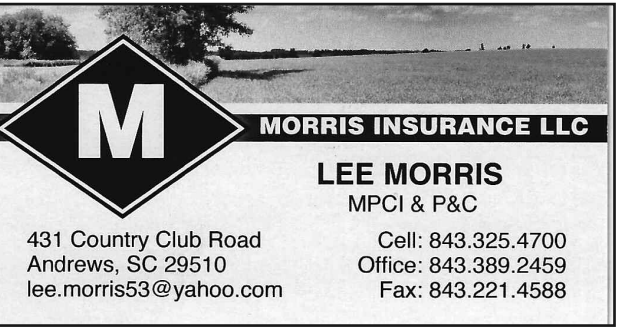
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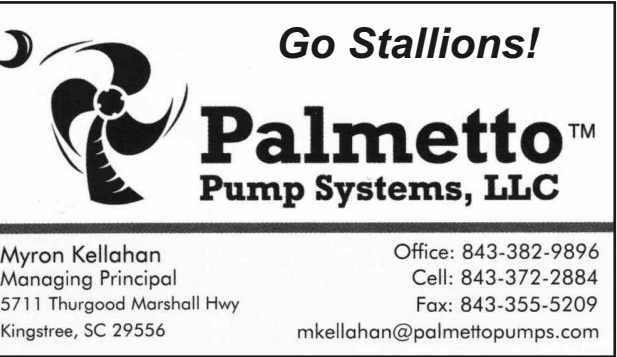
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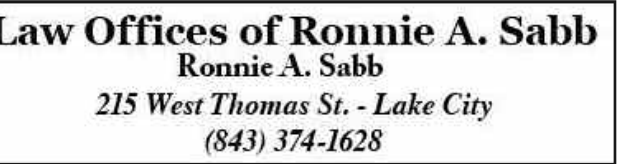
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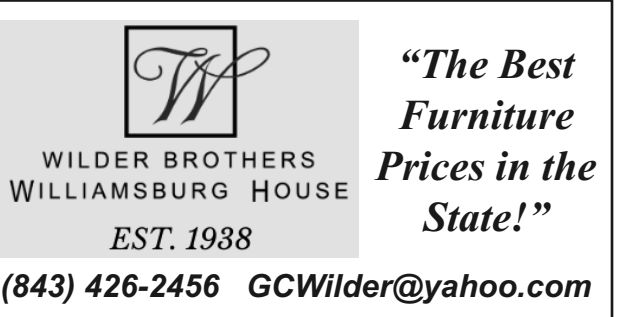
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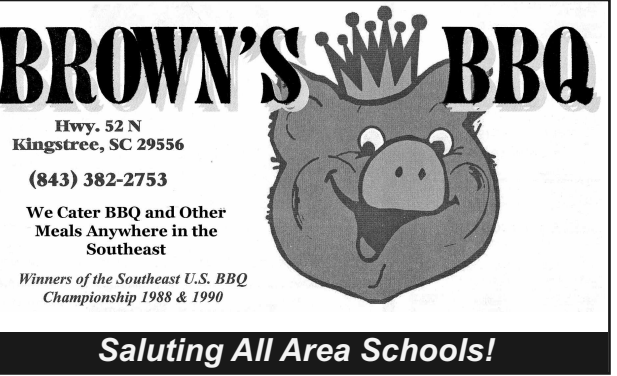
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Bamberg County Feature Page

Bamberg-Ehrhardt looking to finish strong

By Neill Kirkpatrick
By Special to the HSSR

Bamberg – The Red Raider’s got off to slow start to the basketball season as they started the year 2-3 but the slow start was understandable as the Red Raider football team was winning a state championship with several players on that championship team.

They dropped their region opener to Hardeeville 56-51 but since that time they have won six straight and are sitting at 9-3/3-1. Their goal of winning the region championship is still in reach with six region contest left including a rematch with Hardeeville at on 1-27.

“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 Head Coach **Willie Carter**.

Senior captain **Darius Walker** is the leader of the team. The 6-1 guard is a returning starter and is averaging 9.3 points per game

Jamarius Jenkins is also a returning starter. The 6-4 senior provides a low post threat on offense and is a good defender. He has upped his game this season doubling his scoring average to 8.6 points per game while also improving his rebounding and

steals numbers, averaging 5.4 and 1.5, respectively.

Junior guard **Brian McMillian** is back earning all regions last year after averaging 9 points per game, which led the Red Raiders last year he also led the team in assists with 40 and was second in steals with 37. He is second on the team in scoring at 10.5 a game but leads the team in assists at four a night and in steals with two a game. He was recently named to the SCFCA class A All-State team.

Travis Dwight and **Nasir Singleton**, a sophomore and freshman respectively, that round out the early season starting lineup. Singleton has shown his game early as he leads the Red Raiders in scoring at 11.8 points per game.

Senior **Jalen McGraw** has been solid in the paint since returning from the Touchstone Energy North/South game. He is averaging 9.3 points per game and 2.5 boards. He was recently named to the SCFCA statewide All State team as a linebacker. He was the only class A player named to the state wide team.

Junior **Marcus Cann Jr.** has increased his scoring average to 8.4 points per game and is second in rebounding at four a game.

The Red Raiders will get ready for the playoffs over the next seven games as they play five of those games on the road. Finish strong and they could be hosting at least the first two rounds of the class A playoffs but they have a lot of work left to do.



The Vikings boys won Class A last year, can they make a repeat trip?

Lady Vikings in familiar spot, atop region standings

By Neill Kirkpatrick
Special to the HSSR

Denmark – In the past six years there have been two things you can count on as the calendar turns from December to January, fireworks at midnight on New Year’s Eve and the Lady Vikings being undefeated as they head into the bulk of their region schedule.

The last region loss for the Lady Vikings was to Calhoun County 48-46 on January 22nd, 2021. They came into this season on a 53-game region winning streak and have stretched it to 58 as they currently sit at 5-0 in region play. They have five region games remaining and if they win out they will have their fifth undefeated region championships with the region winning streak reaching 63-games.

However, their dominance is not just in region play as they have won three upper state championships and played in one lower state final during

this run. The term “Reload” fits the Lady Vikings to a “T” as each year they lose some outstanding players only to replace them with new and a lot of times with seventh and eighth graders.

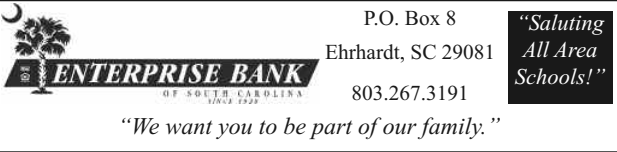
Head coach **Candace Jones** has a squad that has six players that are sophomores or younger that currently sits at 13-4 and is ranked seventh in the latest HSSR poll.

Freshman **Talita Jerido** has the look of the next star for the Lady Vikings. She is third on the team in scoring at 8.2 ppg and in steals with two a game. She is hitting 59% of shots which is a team high. She is solid on the defensive end.

Zyriah McMillian, just an eighth grader, is knocking down 7 points a night. She is second on the team in steals at 2.5 a game.

Sophomores **Keamanni Drayton** and **I’Leah Brown** and eighth graders **Maliyah Moody** and **Kanyia Jones** also see significant minutes and are

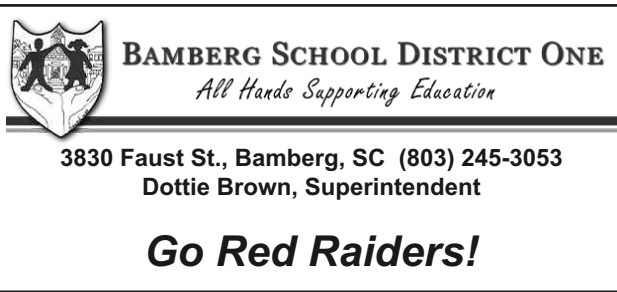
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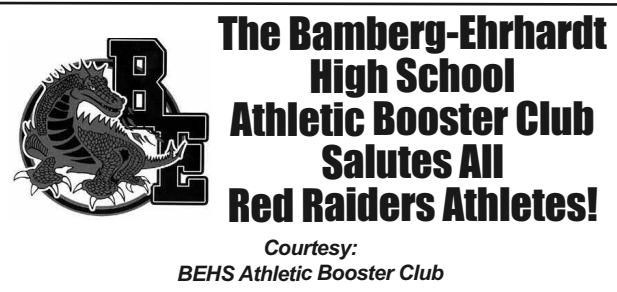
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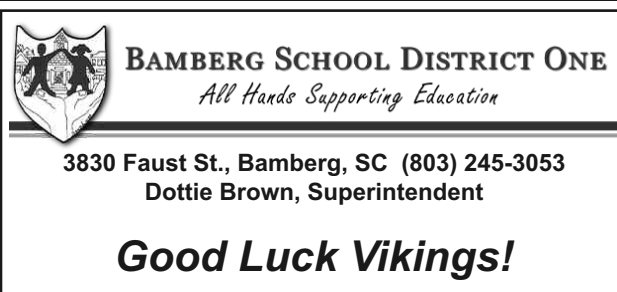


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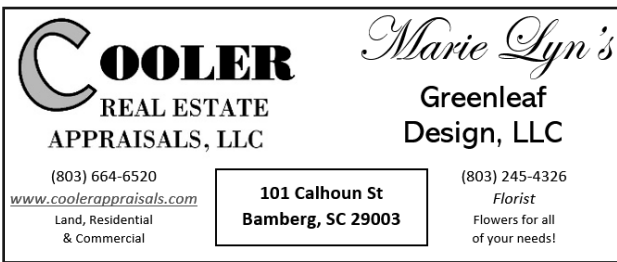
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See **Denmark-Olar**, pg. 33



Stevenson brothers leading Manning boys team

By Dennis Brrunson
hssr.com Associate Editor
Manning – After losing its two leading scorers to graduation from last year’s 17-6 team that reached the second round of the AA state playoffs, the **Manning High School** boys basketball team still seems to be trying to find its footing.

The Monarchs won 10 of their first 19 games. On the bright side though, they opened with a 4-2 record in Region 7.

Leading the way for Manning are junior brothers – though not twins — **Lovell Stevenson** and **Lovon Stevenson**. Both were starters last year and have elevated their games this year.

Lovell, the older brother, led the Monarchs in rebounding at 7.7 per game and was third in scoring with a 9.1 average. So far this season he has stepped up his production in a major way. He is averaging a double-double of 16.2 points and 11.4 rebounds to go with 1.6 blocked shots, 2.1 assists and 2.8 steals.

Lovon is scoring in double figures at 11.9 while grabbing 6.3 boards. He’s also averaging 2.0 assists.

Senior **Jordan Hayward** is averaging 6.7 points, 3.9 rebounds and 2.1 steals, junior **Daniel Robinson** is averaging 6.1 points and 4.2 rebounds, and junior **CJ Robinson** is averaging 4.4 points and 2.4 rebounds.

Others providing valuable minutes off the bench are sophomore **Rodney York Jr.** and freshman **Kaleb Minger**.

Manning is tied for third in the region with *Mar-ion*. However, the Monarchs own a 55-51 triumph over the Swamp Foxes. **Mullins** and **Atlantic Collegiate Academy** are tied for first with 5-1 records.

GIRLS BASKETBALL MAKING SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS

After going 5-18 overall and 1-11 in region play in its first season under head coach **Justin Johnson**, the Manning girls basketball team has made significant progress.

The Lady Monarchs won eight of their first 19 games and started 2-4 in region play. They are in fifth place in the 7=team region, which would qualify them for the state playoffs for the first time since the 2023-24 campaign.

Manning retuned four starters from last year’s lineup in junior **Taniya Johnson**, junior **Asyia Moore**, senior **Tamia Watson** and freshman **Ameerah Conyers**.

Conyers was the leading scorer last season as an eighth-grader with a 10.1 average. The 5-foot-11-inch Conyers averaged a double-double with a 13.4 rebounding average.

She’s averaging a double-double so far this year with a 14.1 scoring average and a 14.3 rebounding average. She’s also averaging 5.1 blocked shots per contest.

Moore is just missing scoring double figures in points with a 9.5 average to go with 2.8 rebounds. Watson is averaging 9.1 points and 6.6 rebounds.

Taniya Johnson leads in assists at 3.4 while pulling down 6.2 rebounds and scoring at a 7.5 clip.

The newcomer to the starting five is freshman **Shamiyah Conyers**. She is averaging 2.8 points and 2.4 rebounds.

Coach Johnson is liberally using his bench with freshman **Unique Calhoun**, junior **Nilah Brown**,

senior **Aniyah James** and freshman **A’Zaria Servance** having seen action in at least 13 of the games.

Other members of the team are freshman **London Evans**, freshman **Verlicia Hilton** and junior **Kelis Pressley**.

WRESTLING PROGRAM PROGRESSING

Richard Schneider has been with the Manning wrestling program since its inception. He has been the head coach the past two seasons after serving as an assistant the first three years. Schneider thinks it is on a major upward trend.

“Our program has grown so much over the years,” Schneider said. “Last season, we set a new program record for wins, number of state qualifiers, and we had our first state placers with **Bree Corley** placing third (in girls) and **Jorden Hilton-Kelly** placing fourth. We had five state qualifiers last year on the team, and this year’s team has the potential to break that record.”

For starters, Manning has wrestlers for nine of the 14 weight classes. Hilton-Kelly is the leader. The junior finished fourth in the state meet last year wrestling in the 106-pound weight class. He is wrestling at 113 this season and is ranked second in the class by **scmat.com**. He owns an 11-3 win-loss record this season.

Joshua White is the other boys wrestler to qualify for state. He owns a 12-8 record this year and is wrestling at 126.

The other members of the team are **Jesse Robinson** at 144 (6-13), **Jacobe Henry** at 150 (2-14), **Bryce Kinard** at 157 (11-10), **Noah Monk** at 165 (10-9), **Billy Leonard** at 175 (1-3), **Eric Roberts** at 190 (3-11) and **Isaiah Hamilton** at 215 (6-8).

Manning has two girls wrestling, senior **Ky-marielle Cleveland** at 115 and **Cierra Utterback** at 110. Cleveland, who qualified for state last year, is ranked seventh and has a 4-2 record. Utterback is 3-2.

“We have a really tough group of wrestlers,” Schneider said. “This is a group of wrestlers to keep eyes on. We are going to miss Kymarielle when she graduates in the spring. Everyone else will be returning next year, and we have experienced wrestlers coming up from the middle school level.

“The wrestlers on the team that are doing well in our program are successful because they focus on getting 1 percent better every day, their goals and push themselves as well as their practice partners to the limit on a regular basis.”

Schneider hopes wrestling a difficult schedule will benefit the Monarchs when qualifying time rolls around.

“I couldn’t be more proud of our team, the work we have done, and the greatness that is ahead of us,” he said. “Our records do not reflect the true potential of this team. As a coach I try to put them in tough matchups during the regular season. It is a rough start for new wrestlers, but in February when they are against other 1A-2A schools they tend to perform higher than expected.”



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Porter-Gaud winter sports season hits stretch run

By David Shelton
Senior Writer
Charleston – The 2025-26 winter sports season has passed the midway point and the athletes at Porter-Gaud are looking to finish out the campaign with a strong effort.

Both basketball teams are competing in region games as of mid-January and both hope to earn a spot in the SCISA AAAA playoffs.

The boys team is the defending AAAA state champion and has opened this season with 12 wins in their first 16 outings. The Cyclones are 2-1 in region play with a loss to Pinewood Prep on Jan. 16..

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 that potential.”

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.

Though changes can and likely will be made as

See Porter Gaud, pg. 70

Ashley Hall basketball building for better future

By David Shelton
Senior Writer
Charleston - The old adage of “learning to crawl before you can walk” certainly applies in many respects to building a successful athletic program. It certainly describes what the basketball program at **Ashley Hall** is working towards as they seek to become a competitive program in the SCISA ranks.

Wins have been hard to come by as Ashley Hall competes in a region that is considered among the most competitive in SCISA with First Baptist and Northwood Academy annually competing for state championships in the largest classification.

Bryan Bednar is in his first season as the varsity head coach and has worked to begin the rebuilding process with a large number of underclassmen. The Panthers finished last season with one win and the current team had not won a game as of Jan. 15, but has been competitive in several contests.

“The region is competitive and experienced at the top. The leading contenders are veteran teams with strong upperclassmen, physical play, and established systems,” reports Bednar. “They tend to execute well, defend consistently, and close games late, which separates them from younger programs.

“Overall, it’s a region where experience, depth, and discipline matter, and most contenders have been together for multiple seasons.”

Bednar has focused on development and gaining experience this season. He has seen improvement in

those areas, as well as other aspects of competitive athletic teams.

“This team’s potential is in its growth and development,” he says. “With three juniors and two freshmen starting, we are a young group gaining valuable varsity experience. While the record isn’t where we want it, our focus is on improving fundamentals, competing harder, and building confidence and accountability.

“My expectation is that we get better each day, play with more consistency and effort, and lay the foundation for long-term success. This season is about learning, resilience, and setting the culture for the future.

Forming the starting lineup for most games are three juniors and two freshmen. The junior starters are guards **Molly Mettler** and **Sally Rowson**, and forward **Catherine Perkins**. Freshmen starters include point guard **Camille Marier** and forward **Amelia Lennon**.

Bednar says Marier, Mettler and Perkins are performing as the top leaders within the program. He counts on their leadership and experience as player to set the tone and bring the motivation to work and compete.

Seeing time off the bench this winter junior guards **Mary Collins** and **Minka Tang**; sophomore guard **Erica Green**, and freshman guard **Adya Sharma**.



2025-26 James Island Trojans basketball

Winter sports in full swing at James Island

By David Shelton
Senior Writer
James Island – The arrival of 2026 signals the start of region play across the state as South Carolina high schools work towards earning a playoff berth in early February.

While all contests are important in the overall development of team chemistry and improvement, non-region games in December do not carry the same level of importance as region competition in January.


James Island Charter’s winter sports are actively competing in region 8-AAAAA, a balanced league in basketball and wrestling. Region titles are

up for grabs and James Island’s teams will be in the mix.

The girls basketball team struggled in the early portion of their season, losing their first seven games, including three losses by three points or less. Things began to turn around towards the end of December and into January as the team has opened region play at 1-1. The overall record entering play on Jan. 16 was 3-11.

Junior **Alexa Lehr** is one of the leading performers for the girls team, averaging 11 points and 9.4 rebounds per game. Junior **Emiya Victor** is averaging 8.4 points and 4.1 rebounds per game while junior **Skylar Singleton** averages 5.1 rebounds per

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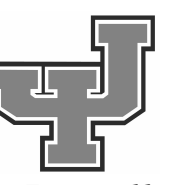
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game. Also contributing offensively are senior **Madisyn Smith**, and juniors **Sarah Ross** and **Olivia Morris**, each scoring about four points per game.

The team overall is fairly young with a host of underclassmen seeing time as reserves. Rounding out the roster are juniors **Caro Chmura**, **Ava Manigault** and **Bri Johnson**; sophomores **Alex Gigis**, **Lila Robertson** and **Zoe Hilyer**; and freshman **Aubree Lanham**.

The boys basketball team played a very demanding schedule in December and entered January with a 5-12 record. The Trojans are the defending region champions and coach **Travis Smith** feels his team can be in the hunt again.

“I think when we have everyone healthy and available, we’re going to be a solid team,” Smith

See James Island, pg. 70

Dillon Christian boys start out season at 7-4

By Dennis Brunson
hssr.com Associate Editor
Dillon – There is a new name listed by head coach for the **Dillon Christian School** boys basketball team in **Ryan Sampson**. He is far from a new-comer though.

“The players are adjusting great,” said Sampson, who is a varsity head coach for the first time. “The guys were already familiar with me because I have been the assistant for the last four years.”

Sampson became head coach after **Bo Stone** decided to step down following the graduation of his son, **Thompson Stone**. The Warriors got off to a good start, winning seven of their first 11 games, including winning their SCISA Region 3-AAA opener against defending state runner-up **Pee Dee Academy** 68-47.

DCS returns three starters from last year’s 11-15 squad in sophomore small forward **Jordan Blackmon**, senior power forward **Reece Bracey** and senior center **Braxton Cummings**.

Blackmon was the leading scorer with a 17.0 points-per-game scoring average and the leading rebounder at 7.7 to go with 2.9 steals. Bracey was averaging 5.5 points, 6.6 rebounds and 2.2 assists to go with a team high 3.1 steals. Cummings was averaging 5.8 points and 5.8 rebounds.

The other starters are 6-foot-3-inch sophomore guard **McKinnon Sampson** and sophomore point guard **Gray Easterling**. Sampson, who is the head coach’s son, is having a strong season, leading Dillon Christian in assists at 3.5 to go with a scoring average of 15.2 and a rebounding average of 5.1.

Easterling is averaging 8.4 points and 2.1 assists. Getting key minutes as part of the rotation are three sophomores in **Blake Hunt**, **Jackson Shooter**

Lee Academy girls picking up the pace in ‘25-26

By Dennis Brunson
hssr.com Associate Editor
Bishopville – Things didn’t look particularly good for the **Lee Academy** girls basketball team through its first five game. The Cavaliers started the year with a 1-4 record.

The second five games have been much, much better. Lee won each of those games for a 6-4 overall record and started 2-0 in SCISA Region 2-AA.

Head coach **Kim Langston** is happy with the way her team is progressing.

“We are adjusting well, learning to play with one another,” the veteran head coach said. “We are improving each time out so that is exciting.”

Leading the way is senior **Mazie Tomlinson**. She leads the team in rebounding, assists and steals. She is averaging 13.5 rebounds per game, 3.7 assists and 2.8 steals while averaging 7.4 points.

Sophomore **Karagan Melton** is the leading scorer at 10.7 while grabbing 3.5 rebounds. Eighth-grader **Beth Whiteside** is averaging 8.3 points and 6.8 rebounds. Senior **Zana Brazell** is scoring at a 3.9 clip to go with 8.2 rebounds. Freshman **Kaisley Melton** is averaging 3.2 points and 2.1 assists.

Coming off a 12-5 season that saw the Cavaliers reach the quarterfinals of the state tournament, Langston said that isn’t really affecting the team this season.

“We really don’t talk about the past, we just take one game at a time,” she said. “We try to focus on

and Mills **Wallace**.

Other members of the team are senior **Tripp Hyatt**, senior **Kaden Locklear**, senior **Zach Ellis**, senior **Wyatt Locklear**, senior **Tyler Jackson**, junior **Branston Brewington** and sophomore **John Paul Walker**.

Coach Sampson is very pleased with the Warriors’ performance to date.

“Above so far,” was Coach Sampson’s response when asked about his team’s play compared to his expectations. “We lost 75 percent of our scoring from last year.”

The overwhelming majority of that lost offense came with the graduation of Stone and **Jackson Outlar**. They both averaged over 20 points a game.

In their absence, McKinnon Sampson and Blackmon have added over 10 points to their scoring averages. Both averaged between four and five points last year.

The Warriors and Pee Dee have a pretty stout region with the likes of **Florence Christian School**, **Williamsburg Academy** and **Christian Academy** of Myrtle Beach.



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the game at hand and move forward.

“Well, you know ,no coach is ever happy so we need to continue to improve, build on each aspect of the game. Each team we play brings different strengths and weaknesses to the court, so we have to be able to adjust and be ready.”

LEE BOYS HAVE SLOW START

The Lee boys basketball team won only two of its first 11 games and started 0-2 in region play. However, head coach **Kemp DeWitt** is choosing to take a positive perspective.

“Yes, the season so far has not been what we wanted and is not what we expected coming into the season,” DeWitt said. “Fortunately for us we have our whole season still in front of us with six more region games. The goal was always to compete and win the region to help set us up in a good position for the state tournament.

“There has been improvement throughout the season, it just has not shown in the results. I feel confident we can turn the season around and make noise in our region.”

Sophomore Brayden Davis leads in scoring with a 9.5 average. Senior **Paxton Greene** is scoring at a 7.4 clip, senior **Cain June** is at 6.2 and junior **Canon Hopkins** is at 5.3.

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Young East Clarendon boys hoops out to 7-8 start

By Dennis Brunson
hssr.com Associate Editor

Turbeville – Head coach **Patrick Kelly** had no idea what he might get from his **East Clarendon High School** boys basketball team heading into the season. The Wolverines returned just two starters from last season’s 6-18 team that went 1-11 in Region 7-AA and missed out on the state playoffs. Add to that there are only two seniors on the roster with just one in the regular rotation, and that adds to the picture of a lack of experience.

“I didn’t know what to expect from this team at the beginning of the season because the team is young and has little varsity experience,” Kelly said. “Either we were going to have a lot of growing pains or play young and free. I am pleased on how they are playing.”

Kelly said that after East Clarendon started with a 7-6 overall record and won two of its first three region contests, thus having already surpassed both win totals from last season. It has since lost two region contests, falling to **Mullins** and **Atlantic Collegiate Academy**.

The two returning starters are sophomore **James Gamble** and junior **Ke'Shaun Porter**. Gamble, who has been starting since the eighth grade, leads the Wolverines in scoring, rebounding and steals. Gamble was averaging 12.4 points per game, 7.2 rebounds and 2.7 steals. He was also averaging 2.6 assists.

Porter is the assists leader and the blocked shots leader with averages of 2.8 and 1.1, respectively. He was also averaging 7.2 points, 4.8 rebonds and 1.5 steals.

The other starters are junior **Braylon Hunt**, sophomore **Rashad Scott** and sophomore **DJ Wilson**. Scott was the second leading scorer with an 11.5 average while pulling down 3.2 rebounds a game. Wilson is the second leading rebounder with a 5.5

Scott's Branch entering region play red hot

By Dennis Brunson
hssr.om Associate Editor

Summerton – The **Scott’s Branch High School** boys basketball team certainly stumbled out of the gate, opening the year with a 3-9 record. My, how things have changed though.

The Eagles have reeled off five consecutive victories, including winning their first two games in Region 5-Class A.

First-year head coach **Damian Days** likes the way his team has developed to this point.

“At the beginning of the year, the players were learning the system, getting in shape and finding chemistry with each,” Days said. “Now that it’s all in place they are meeting the expectations that I have for them.

“I was expecting it to take at least one year to get the program where I wanted it to be, but they are ready now. I feel like the players are responding to the teaching and coaching very well. They have the athletic ability to do all the things I have asked of them and more. This is a great group of guys to compete with.”

The only returning starter from last season is junior **Nyren Bowman**. He is averaging 11.2 points per game dn 5.5 rebounds.

The rest of the starting lineup is made up of sophomore point guard **Kazon Taylor**, junior **Quinton Jackson**, junior **Christian Makell** and sophomore **FraJon Bennett**. Bennett leads the team in both scoring an rebounding with averages of 12.2 and 7.2, respectively. Makell is averaging 9.4 points, Jack-

average while scoring at a 7.1 clip. Hunt is averaging 7.1 points as well.

The other four players in the rotation are sophomore **Ty'Cere Cooper**, freshman **Mark Kelly**, senior **Jaylon Barron** and junior **Crosby Timmons**.

Coach Kelly hopes the best is yet to come for the Wolverines.


“This team has another gear that I believe they can get to,” Kelly said “We lost several games that I know we should have won. It has been little things that kept us from winning those games.

“We don’t have any size. Our tallest guy is 6 foot. We struggle defending in the paint. We are starting to click on offense. The first six games of the year we hit 15 3s (3-point shots), shooting under 30 percent. Then we went through a 6-game stretch hitting 54 3s at 36 percent as a team.”

The other teams in Region 7 are Atlantic Collegiate and Mullins are **Kingstree**, **Lake City**, **Manning** and **Marion**. It is not easy sledding, according to Coach Kelly.

“Our region is tough,” he said. “The Triple Ms are very good — Marion, Mullins and Manning. For us to win games in our region we will need to figure out a way to defend the paint better and limit our turnovers. Being young we will go through stretches where we will turn it over quickly. A lot of that comes from experience.

“If we can do these things we can compete with the Ms. The other teams are not bad and play very aggressive defense and get after it. You can’t take anyone for granted in this region. If you do, they will take it to you.”



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son is averaging 8.2 points and Taylor is averaging 6.3 points. Providing minutes off the bench are senior **Jo Jo Jackson**, junior **Danny Ragin** and sophomores **Kendal Ragin**, **Darnell Livingston** and **Caleb Butler**. Days hopes the Eagles will continue to round into shape coming down the home-stretch of the season

“We need to learn how to limit our turnovers, play as a team more and play hard every possession,” Days said. “If we do that, for a first-year team we will be better than I expected.

“As the playoffs near, we need to take care of the basketball. We need to shoot better from the free throw line and play as hard as we can. If we can do this, we will make a good run with this young core group of guys.”

SCOTT'S BRANCH GIRLS 4-13

The Scott’s Branch girls basketball team won only four of its first 17 games. With the exception of **Trayiona Maxfield**, points have been very hard to come by for the Eagles.

They were averaging just 32.5 points, and Maxfield owned a 14.7 average. She was also the leading rebounder at 6.8.

Maxfield is joined in the starting lineup by seniors **Saniya House** and **Taavashia Scott**, sophomore **Taraji Lawson** and eighth-grader **Irihanna Tindal**. House is averaging 5.8 points, Scott 2.8 points and 2.3 steals, Lawson 2.6 points and Tindal 1.9 points and 4.4 rebounds.

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SUMMERVILLE GREENWAVE

Summerville boys working to replace lost talent

By Roger Lee
Special to the HSSR
Summerville – The Summerville Boys Basketball team has had its ups and downs this season as it works to replace the talent it graduated in the Spring. Summerville lost its long-time coach and many key players at the end of last season, including its leading scorer, who was an All-State player, and its leading rebounder. However, this season’s squad does have some talent and new head coach **Michael Jenkins** served as an assistant coach for the team last year.

“I feel very optimistic,” Jenkins said. “The expectation is for this young group to be very competitive.” Senior point guard **Josiah Taylor** is the only returning starter. He averaged 4 rebounds, 2.5 assists and 1.8 steals per game as a junior. Senior **Zavarion (Z.J) Jenkins** is a returning letterman with wing experience and freshman **Reed Robinson** saw some action at guard with the varsity team last season before he even entered high school. The two of them, along with senior guard **Damani White** and junior forward **Noah Harrison**, are expected to be big contributors.

Others on the roster include senior **Kaden Palmer**, juniors **Kymani Robinson**, **Dakaden Ravenell** and **Josiah Deas**, sophomores **Lamell Grant**, **Austin Tate** and **Yemilier Vazquez** and freshmen **Kaden Husley** and **Micah Jones**. Summerville entered the week with an 8-7 record with a 1-2 mark in Region 8-AAAAA. The Green Wave has wins over **Stratford**, **Lexington**, **Lucy Beckham**, **Wando**, **Westminster Catawba Christian**, **First Baptist School** and **Stall**. Summerville travels to **West Ashley** Jan. 20 and host rival **Fort Dorchester** at 7:30 p.m. Jan. 23.

Lady Green Wave
The roster for the 2025-26 **Summerville Girls Basketball** varsity includes more eighth-graders than it does seniors. “I have great leadership in the locker room and that is the most important thing,” said Summerville coach **Calvin Davis**. “On the floor we are so young we just don’t have the leadership we’ve had in the previous years, but in the future this will be a tough team.” The team finished last season with a 24-4 record and came closer than it ever has to claiming a state championship, falling 62-56 March 7 during the **5A, Division I Girls Basketball** state title game. However, Summerville lost all five starters from that team, including an All-State player. This season’s team only has two seniors. It has four juniors, two sophomores, two freshmen and three eighth-graders.

“We are trying to develop a bunch of players to play different roles,” Davis said. “We have a lot of pieces we are trying to put together.” Sophomore **Madelyn Marsaa** and juniors **Jordan Espinal** and **Destinee Grant** are returning let-termen who have been a big part of the program and are being leaned on to set the tone. **Ciara Grant** and **Telissah Johnson** are also back and looking to make the most of their senior season. Other members of the team are **Addelyn Chapman**, **Kendall Grant**, **Abigail Creel**, **Adaliah Bostic**, **Da’Nyla Riley**, **Gabrielle White**, **Kynadie**



Senior **Josiah Taylor** is a returning starter for Summerville
Photo by Roger Lee

Palmer and **Ariel Beeler**. The Lady Green Wave is out to a 6-10 start with a 1-2 mark in the region. The wins came over **Battery Creek**, **Orangeburg-Wilkinson**, **Burke**, **Stratford**, **Cane Bay** and **Stall**. Summerville took **Ashley Ridge** into overtime Jan. 16 before falling 53-50 to the **Swamp Foxes**. **Green Wave Wrestling** Summerville nearly upset the top-ranked **5A, Division 1** wrestling team Jan. 5. The Green Wave entered the Jan. 15 match against **James Island** ranked fourth in the division. The **Trojans**, which lost to Summerville during a December tournament, claimed a 37-25 win in the rematch at Summerville. “That was a really good high-school match,” said Summerville coach **Daryl Tucker**. “I have a lot of respect for those guys and what they are doing over there, but man we had our chances. There were two overtime matches tonight that could have gone either way so I’m pleased with the effort.” The 190-pound match pitted James Island’s **Copeland Grooms**, ranked second in the state for the division, and Summerville’s **Eli Pressley**, who is ranked fifth. After regulation ended in a 7-7 tie, the match was decided in Grooms’ favor by a single point due to an unsportsmanlike conduct officiating call Summerville fans vocally disagreed with. The Trojans also took the next match at 215 when **Morris White** pinned his opponent in an overtime period.

In the 138 class, Summerville’s **Dearrian Ford** claimed a major decision over **Trent Collins**. Ford is unranked while Collins is ranked seventh in the class. Summerville’s **Ridge Rollison** (ranked 4th at 106) and **Tytrell Fripp** (175) won their class by technical fall. **Kayleb Pinckney** (6th at 114), **Austin Stitner** (120) and **Mason Whisenhunt** (157) claimed a major decision. **Trenton Anderson** (126) won by

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Hammond boys turn corner on rebuilding season

By WORTHY EVANS
Staff Writer
Columbia -With only one true starter in **Jackson Ross** and a plethora of returners and junior-varsity players with limited experience, the **Hammond** boys basketball team (7-11, 2-2 SCISA Region 1-4A) was in a development stage for much of this season. After Friday night’s 64-62 loss to region leader **Ben Lippen** (15-7, 4-0), head coach **David Ross** said his team may have turned the corner. “When we started with this group at the beginning of the year we were at the bottom of the hill,” Ross said after the game. “Slowly but surely with painstaking efforts, we’re getting a little bit better every day.”

While Hammond’s effort came down as a loss, Ross said he’s pleased that the team really showed improvement against a top opponent in clutch situations. Jackson Ross, who scored a game-high 38 points, led the way on the floor. **Hugh Manning** had 13 points as Ross and the team stayed close enough to Ben Lippen to mount a fourth-quarter comeback. “What I’m happy about is some of the work that these guys are putting in and a lot of the things that we’ve been stressing came to fruition,” Coach Ross said. “It’s the best execution of a game plan this year, and I told them if you can execute what I’m asking you to do, you’re going to be in a position to win the game.” The Skyhawks, who trailed the Falcons 39-30 at the half and fell behind by as many as 12 points early in the third quarter, went on a 12-4 scoring run from a 55-48 deficit late in the fourth quarter. Down 59-58, **Wham Walker** drew a foul, went to the free-throw line and sank both shots to give

Wilson Hall girls open basketball season strong

By Dennis Brunson
hssr.com Associate Editor
Sumter – The **Wilson Hall** girls basketball team came out of the gates with a fast start. The Lady Barons won 10 of their first 14 games and opened play in Region 3-AAAA with a 53-33 triumph over **Trinity Collegiate**. Veteran WH head coach **Glen Rector** is happy with what he has seen from his team. “They have exceeded our expectations and are still making progress every day,” Rector said. Wilson Hall has already exceeded its win total from last year when it went 9-17 and lost in the first round of the state tournament. The Lady Barons return four starters from that squad, and adding to the anticipation is the fact underclassmen make up this starting lineup. The returning starters are junior **Caroline Moorman**, sophomores **Lilly Grace Przybyla** and **Grace McArthur** and freshman **Emmie Williamson**. The newcomer to the starting lineup is sophomore **Ellis Coker**, last season’s sixth man. Przybyla, an all-region selection as a freshman, is the leading scorer at 13.3 points per game as well as in rebounding at 7.6. Moorman is averaging 7.5 points, 2.4 rebounds and 2.2 steals while McArthur is at 7.2 points and 7.2 rebounds.

Williamson leads the team in steals at 4.3 and assists at 2.0 to go with a scoring average of 5.3 and 3.1 rebounds. Coker is averaging 5.9 points and 2.4 steals. Senior **Ella Still** is the first player off the bench.

Hammond a 60-59 lead at the 1:45 left in the game. A Jackson Ross basket later tied the game at 62 with 45 seconds left, but **Braysen Stockman**, who had 19 points to lead Ben Lippen, put the Falcons ahead with a jumper with 11 seconds left. Ross fought through the Ben Lippen defense and took a midrange jumper at the buzzer, but the ball bounced off the rim. “My hope is what we get out of this is we’ve got to make plays to win the game, and if we follow the game plan and you play with energy and you execute, you’re going to be in a position to win,” Coach Ross said. “We’ve had a lot of games when we weren’t able to do that.” In the girls game, Hammond (11-4, 3-1) battled Ben Lippen (14-6, 4-0) for first place in the region. Ben Lippen’s back court pestered Hammond, with Ny’**Lasia Gipson** scoring 15 points, **Ariel Summons** adding 14 points and guard **Elaina Whalen** putting up 12 points in a 54-36 victory. **Jazz McMillan** scored 16 points and **Sami Campbell** added 10 points to lead Hammond. While going down as a loss, Hammond battled back from a 17-2 deficit accrued by the midpoint of the second quarter, but was still down 28-16 by the half and 40-21 going into the fourth quarter. “Sometimes you have a tough game and shots don’t fall, the matchups become tough, but it’s just one game,” Head coach **Mark Goddard** said. “It would’ve been the same win or lose. You win a game, you flush it, and move on to the next. We’re not going to let this affect us.” Hammond boys and girls played in the King Holiday classic hosted by the Skyhawks. The boys beat **Newberry** 59-35 and the girls beat **West-Oak** 41-37.

Still, who started some games as a junior, is averaging 2.0 points and 3.3 rebounds.

WILSON HALL BOYS START 10-6
The Wilson Hall boys basketball team lost four starters from last year’s 20-10 team that won a region title. The Barons won 10 of their first 16 games and started 0-1 in region play. The lone returning starter is 6-foot-4-inch **Ford Wilder**. The all-region selection was leading the team in scoring at 19.9 and rebounding at 6.6 to go with 1.8 steals. Juniors **Caulder Williamson** and **Eric Brown**, both of whom played significant minutes off the bench last season, are key performers. Williamson led in assists at 3.6 and steals at 2.1 while scoring at an 8.7 clip and grabbing 2.9 rebounds. Brown was averaging 7.3 points and 4.7 rebounds. Other key contributors are junior **Johnny Lauzon** and sophomores **Nolan Gooch** and **Nehemiah Dinkins**. Lauzon was averaging 6.6 points, 3.6 rebounds and 2.1 assists, Gooch was averaging 6.1 points, 3.2 rebounds and 2.0 assists, and Dinkins was averaging 7.6 points and 4.5 rebounds. WH head coach **Rip Ripley** was using his bench liberally with five other players having played in at least 14 games. They are 6-5 junior **Ryan Griffin**, senior **Bryce Hanson**, junior **Joseph Hiott**, sophomore **Wilson Mims** and junior **Abel Ayres**.

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Things looking up for Fort Dorchester basketball

By Roger Lee
Special to the HSSR
North Charleston – The Fort Dorchester Boys Basketball team is looking for a better finish this season.

The Patriots have suffered through growing pains the last couple of years. They finished 9-17 last season and 13-10 two seasons ago. Region wins have proven hard to come by and the Fort was eliminated from the playoffs during the first round two consecutive years.

However, this season things don't seem as bleak for the squad, which enters the week with an 11-7 record and ranked 10th for 5A, Division 1.

"We have been young, but those guys who stuck with us are looking to put this team back on the map," said Fort Dorchester coach Thomas McElveen. "We had a better start than we've had the last couple of years. Guys are playing very good defense and sharing the ball. We aren't selfish and have good attitudes so we are playing together like a family, bonding and jelling and that is why we've been successful."

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 season.

Senior forward Jaden Polite and senior wing Deondre Haynes are experienced and taking on leadership roles. The Patriots are also leaning 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



Photo by Roger Lee
Fort Dorchester's Maricious Dawson drives to the rim

and Linster "Bear" Burgess.

"I feel very good about this team," McElveen said. "I think the key will be our defense."

The Fort opened region play Jan. 9 by upsetting region rival Ashley Ridge (ranked 6th for Division 1) by a 69-61 margin. The Patriots pressed hard to create turnovers while hitting shots to open up a 12-point first-quarter lead.

"I told the guys we needed to come out with a lot of energy," McElveen said. "We tend to start slow but I told them if we bring the energy from the start they would fold. We jumped on them and they weren't expecting us to come out like that."

Fort Dorchester led 42-29 at the half and 56-44 at the end of the third quarter. Ashley Ridge amped up its aggressiveness in the final quarter to cut the lead

Ashley Ridge boys looking to take the next step

By Roger Lee
Special to the HSSR
Summerville – The Ashley Ridge Boys are out to a strong start for the 2025-26 basketball season.

The Swamp Foxes have a dozen varsity lettermen back from a team that went 18-8 last season and placed second in its region. The team is out to top that effort.

"We look to take the next step this season and win a region championship," said Ashley Ridge coach Brad Dobbels. "Games are going to be tight, but I like where we are and our team chemistry and the way our guys sacrifice for each other. If we can keep those things going and get a little more consistent defensively I think we will give ourselves a good chance to win it all."

Many of the players who are back played important roles last season.

Senior guard Clayton Everett Jr is an All-State player the Foxes lean heavily upon. He led the team in scoring last season, averaging 20.2 points per game. He was also the leading rebounder, averaging 8.7 boards per game.

Junior point guard Javion Gathers, junior guard Shayne Pinckney and senior shooter Ben Duncan are also returning starters. Others back from last year's squad are seniors AJ Ward, Evan Terry and Javari Walker and juniors Jhi Gibbs, Nate McKee, Maurquis Lee, Grant Riemer and Taylen Crutcher. Senior guard Gerald Garner and junior power forward Gabe Geddis are new to the team.

Gathers led in assists last season, averaging 4.2, while also chipping in 11 points, 3.6 rebounds and 2.3 steals per game. Duncan averaged



Photo by Roger Lee
All-State player Clayton Everett Jr is having another terrific season

10.8 points. Everett averaged 3.1 steals and 2.4 assists while Pinckney averaged 1.5.

The Swamp Foxes entered this week with a 16-2 record with a 2-1 mark in Region 8-A. Wins include those over Oceanside Collegiate Academy, Beaufort, Socastee, Atlantic Collegiate Academy, Berkeley, Mill Creek, Lucy Beckham, Stall, Summerville and Covenant Day of North Carolina. The losses came to Cane Bay and Fort Dorchester.

"We've played good during stretches, but we

FORT DORCHESTER



to five points, but didn't hit the shots it needed to close the gap further.

Things didn't go as well for the Patriots the next week and they lost at West Ashley and at James Island to drop to 1-2 in Region 8-A.

The Patriots look to get back on track when they host Stall Jan. 20 and make the short trip to region rival Summerville Jan. 23.

Dawson is the team's current leading scorer, averaging 13.1 points per game. Polite is averaging 11.8 points and Jenkins is averaging 10.3. Concepcion leads in free throws per game and three-point percentage. Dawson, Concepcion and Porter are the assists leaders.

Jenkins leads in rebounds per game (7.9) followed by Dawson (4.4) and Haynes (3.4).

ASHLEY RIDGE



need to keep that consistency," Dobbels said. "We'll get up double digits, then relax a couple of possessions and let teams hit some shots to make it a tight game again. We are winning games, but we can do a lot better coming down the stretch of games."

Everett leads the team in scoring this season, averaging 21.3 points per game. Pinckney and Gathers both average more than 10 points per game. Gathers leads in assists with 3.6 per game. Pinckney (2.5) and Everett (2.2) follow in the category.

Everett also leads in rebounds, averaging 8.1. Ward (4.1) and Gathers (3.1) have also been big on the boards.

"This week is a big one with us going to Pinewood, James Island and West Ashley," Dobbels said. "After we lost our season opener, we ran off 14 wins in a row. We lost to Fort Dorchester in the first region game, but hopefully we have started another run."

On Jan. 30 the Swamp Foxes get another shot at Fort Dorchester, which is scheduled to travel to Ashley Ridge for an 8:30 p.m. tipoff.



Boys' basketball encouraged by return of Jeter

By Billy G. Baker
Publisher
Gaffney —In a scrimmage game, prior to the start of the 2025-26 Gaffney boys' basketball season, 6-2 senior point guard **Damarius Jeter** scored 16 points, had 8 rebounds, seven assists, with six on-ball steals, and 11 deflections before he broke his hand and it appeared he would be lost the season. "He was our team senior leader, and by far the fastest player we put on the court, with great all-around ball skills," said Gaffney head boys coach **Charles Blue** now in his third year with the Indians. "One of the most positive things that has happened to Damarius is that he has picked up a next level opportunity to attend the Flight 22 Prep School in Wilmington, NC next season and we are very excited for him.

"Believe it or not, he has returned to practice (mid-January) where he is focused on running and conditioning drills to get into shape, and we expect him to get cleared to rejoin the team very soon," said Coach Blue. "We just don't know how much he will be able to play but if he can go at 80 per cent of his pre-season play, we could be a surprise team in the upcoming play-offs."

Gaffney did not return a starter from last year's team. Two players graduated and two former starters opted to transfer out of the program. A 5th player, **Zyon Ratchford**, graduated early to enroll at **East Carolina** in December where he is on football scholarship.

As of January 15, the Indians are 4-10 and 2-3 in region play with 9 region games left in the regular season starting with a home game against **Riverside** on Jan. 16.

"With Jeter back in the line-up we should be very competitive the rest of the regular season and we will have a strong goal to win enough games to finish at least third in the region," said Coach Blue. "Being realistic, **Byrnes** and **Dorman** are the top two teams in our region with a lot of talent. I feel like with a strong finish we can finish third in the region."

The team is led on offense by a core group of three players averaging between 9 and 10 points a game. Senior small forward **Jonathan Buckson** (6-3, 185) leads the scoring index at 10.3 points and 6.6 rebounds a game. "In region play, Jonathan is actually averaging 17 points a game," said Coach Blue. "Jonathan is very athletic and I feel like he has next level ability."

Gaffney girls focused on more consistent play

By Billy G. Baker
Publisher
Gaffney—With their win over **Riverside** (73-40) on January, 16 as the *HSSR* was going to press, the **Gaffney** girls' basketball team improved to (13-5 & 4-2) on the season and fresh on their minds are upcoming home games against Byrnes and Dorman that will determine how they finish in highly competitive region.

Gaffney's two region losses on the 2025-26 season, came on recent road games against **Byrnes** (59-55) and **Dorman** (66-64) so the Indians have got to feel like they have a shot to avenge those close losses when Byrnes visits on January, 30 and Dorman comes calling on February, 3.

In the latest *HSSR* statewide basketball rankings, Gaffney is number six in the Div. II AAAAA rank-

The other top scorers are junior shooting guard **Jonah McSwain** at 9.9 points and 6.1 rebounds a game along with sophomore football prospect **Zion Dawkins**, (5-11l, 186), a point guard averaging 9.5 points, 2.5 rebounds, 3.6 assists and 2.5 steals a game.

"Jonah is a three-level scorer who is actually averaging 8 rebounds in region play," said Coach Blue. "Zion could also develop into a next level basketball prospect because he a slasher who shoots the ball really well while playing great on-ball defense."

Junior **Emanuel Halsey-Haney** starts at a guard, and he is described as the team's "glue guy averaging 5.7 points a game. Sophomore power forward **Hank Davidson** is averaging 3.2 points as a (6-4,225) inside player. "Hank is a very young sophomore, and he is just learning how to adapt to the speed of varsity basketball," said Coach Blue. "He has very good potential to develop into a good player."

A sixth man off the bench is senior combo guard **Zaymarion Watkins** (6-0,170) and the next player off the bench is usually 6-4 senior SF **Braylon Givens** who is gaining confidence with every game. Senior SF **Jaylin Stepp** is described as a "*Dennis Rodman*" type player who is a rebounding machine despite being only 5-11 according to Coach Blue. Another player who sees considerable time off the bench is junior SG **Cy'delyon Lope**.

Other hard-working reserve players include freshman **Phil Herbin**, senior SF **Johnathan Silva**, junior center **John Burgress** (6-5,200), and junior center **Kamari Briggs** (6-4, 200).

The team's four wins this season have come over **Eastside** (69-53), **Wade Hampton** (64-56), **Atlantic Collegiate Academy** (73-58), and **Powdersville** (60-58).

The team began their final push of the regular season with a home game against **Riverside** on January 16. They will then play three straight road region games against Boiling Springs, Wade Hampton, and Eastside. They then host Byrnes and Dorman on Jan 3 and Feb 3, respectively. They close out the regular season with region games against Spartanburg and **Riverside** on the road before concluding at home against Boiling Springs on Feb. 13.

Coach Blue is assisted by **Ty Byars**, **William Dawkins**, **Deoreion Eison**, **Matthew Gardner**, and **Dazmine Simpson**.

ing. **Byrnes** and **Dorman** are ranked one and four respectively in the latest *HSSR* Div. I rankings, so once the playoffs start the Indians will not compete against either of their region rivals in the play-offs.

Gaffney head coach **Julian Wright** talked about both narrow losses to Byrnes and Dorman. "We had one of our worse shooting nights of the season against Byrnes," said Coach Wright. "**Lauren Mathis** did not score in the game and **Tinah Hopper** was held to a season low 10 points and she also fouled out of the game. Give credit to Byrnes for playing solid defense against us.

"Against Dorman we are up by one with 1:06 left in the game, with the ball, and a turnover gave them back the ball and they scored late to beat us by


See **Gaffney**, pg. 31




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Green Acres Turf Farm Prospects Page



HSSR Top 100 Basketball Prospects

Special Note: This list is a work in progress. Coaches are asked to nominate deserving players in any grade to hsreport@aol.com as soon as possible. Please include stats with nomination.

HSSR SC 2026 Girl's Senior Prospects

1. Celena Grant-North Augusta-G/SF
2. Zara Leamon-Mauldin-5-10-PG
3. Shiriah Harris-Gaffney-6-0-F
4. Chole Hudson-Rock Hill-5-9 PG
5. Morgan White-Dorman-6-5 PF/C
6. Ni'Yonna Asbelle-Andrew Jackson-PG
7. Kami Roach-Walhalla-PG-5-6
8. Lakiara Ayona Alexander-Camden-6-1-F
9. Chase Thomas-Blythewood-5-8- G
10. Shirah Harris-Gaffney6-0-F
11. Danielle Oliver-Greenwood-5-6-G
12. Messiah Williams-North Augusta-C-PF
13. Monasia Clinkscales-Westside-5-7-
14. Ava Rush-Wando-6-3-SF
15. Miracle McLean-Carolina Forest-6-3 PF/C
16. Jaida Johnson-Byrnes-C
17. Kailen Parks-North-5-8-PG
18. Maliyah Williams-Marion-5-9-G-SD
19. Madison Thomas-Berkeley-5-11-SF
20. India Williams-Blythewood-5-8-G
20. Miley White-Walhalla-5-11-F
21. Kyndal Haroski-Riverside-G
23. Tykirea Johnson-Greenwood-6-0-F
24. Autumn Joseph-Darlington-6-0-PF
25. Jada Bates-Northwood -PG-5-7 2026
26. Jhnai Sumter-Lower Richland-5-9-F
27. Ava Owens-Greenville-5-7-PG
28. Teonaa Draughn-AC Flora
29. Harmoni Williams-Orangeburg-Wilkinson-
30. Tiffany Helmer-St. Joseph's-5-7-G
31. Ava Clinkscales-TL Hanna-9th-PG
32. Kyle Fortnet-Landrum-G
33. Caroline Sweet-Powdersville
34. Kamiyah Christian-BHP-9th-PG
35. Micah Davis-Atlantic Collegiate
36. Devyn Burgrss-West Oak
37. Cameron Oliver-Greenwood- 5-5- SG
38. Joanna Burgree-West Oak
39. Zion Prioleauu-Timberland
40. Sophia Powell-North Myrtle beach-
40. Mylayja Thompson-Clinton
41. Da'Nyriah Williams-Military Magnet-
42. Kailya Herman-Loris
43. Paige Pouyat-First Baptist 5-7-G
44. My'Keriyah Holmes-Lee Central-
46. Naomi House-McBee-
47. Kailen Parks-North-PG
48. Kailya Herman-Latta
49. Maddy Pojani-First Baptist-5-9-PG
50. Braelin Cumbee-Daniel-SG

HSSR Junior Girl's To Watch (2027)

1. Khalia Hartwell-Westside-6-5-C
2. Ashley Walker-North Augusta-5-10-F
3. Tinah Hopper-Gaffney-G
4. Serenity Williams-Lee Central-507-G
5. Amani McCray-Berkeley-5-7-PG

6. Maliyah Birch-Northwood Academy-PG
7. Khur-Nylahi McKinnon-Dillon-PG-5-8
8. Ellison Silver-Byrnes-G-
9. Gabby Moore-First Baptist-5-6-PG
10. Naydia Shaw-Kingstree-5-10-G-F
11. Janyia Cunningham-South Pointe-F
12. Madison Verrem-North Myrtle Beach-F
13. Adelaide Suddeth-Palmetto Chrsitian-5-1-F
14. Brayin Mingo-South Pointe-G
15. McKinley Beard-Andrew Jackson Academy-F
16. Tralyn Phillips-South Pointe-G

HSSR Girls Players To Watch (2028)

1. Tiana Marshall-Westside-5-10-G/F-8th
- 2.Treasure Davis-Dillon-SG—5-6
3. Kaleigh Lucas-South Pointe-5-5-CG-
4. Araina Ross-Sumter-SF
5. Campbell Childers-Northside Vhristian-G-8th
6. Logan Murray-Wilson-F 6-0
7. Alaina Carter-Berkeley-5-11-G
8. Evie Adams-St. Joseph's-5-10-G
9. Jurnee Williams-Emerald-PG-
10. Kailen Grant-HKT-PG-5-4
- 11, Aliyah Tisdale-Latta-F-
12. Campbell Epting-Daniel-G-

HSSR 2029 Girl's Players To Watch

1. Ashlyn Evans-Byrnes-5-9 PG
2. Tiana Marshall-Westside-5-10-G
3. Madeline Dates-Goose Creek-G
- 4, Hannah Riles-Lake City-5-7-CG-9th

HSSR 2026 Top Boy's Prospects

1. Levi Ball-Gray Collegaite-SG-6-6
2. Caden Coleman-Greenville-PG 6-1
3. Tre Raymon-South Pointe-6-7-F
4. BJ Brown-Sumter-F-6-6
5. Sebi Boyogueno-Riverside-SF-6-4
6. Ja'Quell Brown-Goose Creek-PG
7. Broderick Anderson Jr Keenan-G/F-6-5
8. Justis Bell-Dutch Fork-PF-6-6
9. Malik Tinsley-Lancaster-5-9-G
10. Jonathan Slawson-Pinewood Prep-6-0-G
11. Terence McFaddeb-Bethune Bowman-6-3-G
12. Damien Kinloch-Berkeley-6-8,195-PF
13. Clayton Everett, Jr-Ashley Ridge-
14. Talon Staley-Ridge View-
15. Anthony Atkins-Christ Church-6-1-PG
16. Jonathan Perry-Christ Church-6-2-G
17. Jayden Baylor-Abbeville-6-1-G
18. Lucas Wiersma-TL Hanna-
19. Kendall Mack-West Ashley-PG-
20. Osaiah Atkins-Boiling Springs-
21. Wallace Vampbell-Fort Mill
22. Darius Brooks-Hampton County
23. Jordan Rouse-North Augusta-
24. KJ Allen-Wilson-
25. Will Bush-Dorman-PF-
26. Jayden Crews-Westwood-PgG
27. Antwon Young-York Prep
28. Eric Gray-Union County
29. Khalid Sheerman-Loris
30. AJ Washington-Fort Mill-SG
31. Abe Davinroy-Oceanside Collegiate

32. Jordan McGahee-Orangeburg-Wilkinson
33. Eli Brown-Chesnee
34. Ta'Maj Gilliam-Batesburg-Leesville
35. Zakasen Clyburn-Andrew Jackson
36. Tony Odom-CA Johnson
37. Aissaic Germany-CA Johnson
38. Caden Ramsey-Cross-F-6-6
39. Quh'Mareon Webb-North Augusta-6-3, G-F

HSSR Junior Boy's Prospects 2027

1. Josh Leonard-Wilson-W-6-6,200
2. Colt Fowler-Byrnes-PG-5-9, 145
3. Bryce Ward-Cathedral-5-11-SG
4. Tripp Eidson-Pinewood Prep-PF
5. Jalen Culp-Lewisville-G
6. Peyton Jennings-White Knoll-G
7. Jervase Salley-Woodland-F
8. Drey Jackson-Easley-5-11, PG-
9. Christian Rivera-Denmark-Olar-G-

HSSR Sophomore Boy's To Watch (2028)

Antoine Caughman-Keenan-6-4-G
Zay Harris-North Augusta-5-11-PG
Jayden Crawford-Green Sea-Floyds-5-8-G
Jeremiah Nelson-Fort Mill-PG

HSSR-SCISA Top Boy's Basketball Players
(As of 2-1-2025 Send nominations to hsreport@aol.com)

1. Tiden Riley-Orangeburg Prep-6-5-SF-2026
2. Brayson Stockman-Ben Lippen-6-3-G-2026
3. Tre Freen-Pinewood Prep-F-6-3, 195-2027
4. Jackson Ross-Cardinal Newman-6-3 G-2027
5. Ty Shine-Curtis Baptist-G-2027
6. Bryce Ward-Cathedral Academy-G-2027
7. Tony O'Banner-Thomas Heyward-6-0,PG-2026
8. Bryce Reyierson-Augusta Christian-6-3-F
- 9.Kais Paris-Pinewood Prep-F-2027
10. Kamauri Hunter-Heathwood Hall-PG-2026
11. Thomas Hester-St. Johns Christian-G-2026
12. Tripp Eidson-Pinewood Prep-6-8-SF-2027
13. Harrison Skinner-Hilton Head Christian-5-80PG-2026
14. Hall Sease-Andrew Jackson Academy-SG-6-3
15. Bennett Nicholson-Richard Winn-5-10-PG-2026
16. Kirk Trenton-Porter-Gaud-PG-2026
17. Ollie Barnes-Andrew Jackson-PG-5-11,165
18. Nick Lindsey-Holl Hill Academy-8th-G-2028

HSSR-SCISA Top Girl's Basketball Players
(As of 1-15-2026 All Grades)

1. Alayah Birch-Northwood Academy-CB-2027
2. Gabby Moore-First Baptist-F-2027
3. Emerson Poston-Florence Christian-G-2027
4. Jada Bates-Northwood Academy-PG-5-7 2026
5. Adelaide Suddeth-Palmetto Chr-5-11-F-2027
6. Hannah Lambrecht-Or'burg Prep-PG-5-7-2026
7. Maddy Pojani-First Baptist-5-9-PG2026
8. Gabby Moore-First Baptist-G-2027
9. Mary Legare Delaney-Or'burg Prep-G- 2027
10. Ryan Mayers-The Cross Schools-
11. McKinnley Beard-Andrew Jackson-F-5-11 2027

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NETC Student Athletes of the Month

Honoring Latta's Kate Gasque

Latta—**Kate Gasque** is a senior student athlete at **Latta High School**, where she has been a member of the cheerleading squad since the eighth grade. She started on the junior varsity squad and moved up to varsity where she's been a "back spotter" for stunts and lifts, as well as an enthusiastic leader on the sidelines.

Gasque is enjoying her senior year and continuing to take NETC online classes to help prepare for college.

Gasque said she enjoys cheering at football and basketball events while she calls baseball her favorite sport to watch. She enjoys her time on the sidelines of football and basketball games, two sports that have back-to-back long seasons. After high school, Gasque plans to attend **Clemson University** and focus on her studies.

While she has enjoyed being a cheerleader, once this basketball season ends, she will miss the camaraderie of the team and friendships she has developed over the years.

In the classroom, she carries a 5.240 GPA, and she says that after high school she plans to major in Agri-Business while at Clemson.

For all her athletic and academic accomplishments, Gasque 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 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 dual credit courses for the 2025-26 school year to students in the three counties they serve.

Currently, Gasque is enrolled in dual credit online courses offered by NETC. She just started taking classes this school year, and is completing classes that will fill basic requirements for freshman year of college. She has taken Math 110 and this semester will

See **Gasque**, pg. 41



Kate Gasque

Honoring Latta's Heath Mew

Latta — **Heath Mew** is a senior and former two-sport athlete at **Latta High School**, where he played baseball and basketball before switching to only playing Golf for his senior year. Of the three sports he has participated in, he readily admits that Golf is his favorite sport, despite having just started playing the game a year ago.

While Mew will close out his high school career playing golf, he does have fond memories of playing basketball from the seventh grade through his junior year. Similarly, he played baseball starting in the eighth grade through his sophomore year. Everything changed when he says, "My buddies invited me to go play golf and I found I really enjoyed the game," he said. That outing led him to eventually play golf for on his high school team.

In the classroom Mew carries a 4.512 GPA, while maintaining his on-line course load, and participating in sports.

For all his athletic and academic accomplishments, Mew 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 di-

rectors 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 dual credit courses for the 2025-26 school year to students in the three counties they serve.

Mew is currently enrolled in dual credit courses offered by NETC. He just finished College Algebra and this semester he will take Psychology. His plans are to attend **North Greenville University** and work towards a degree in Physical Therapy. Afterwards, he aspires to enroll in MUSC's Doctor of Physical Therapy program and make that his career.

By taking the online courses through the NETC, Mew says, "It will help me prepare for the work-load and schedule I can expect with my future

See **Mew**, pg. 41



Heath Mew



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LMA boys basketball team progressing well

By Dennis Brunson
hssr.com Associate Editor
Manning – The **Laurence Manning Academy** boys basketball team is off to a tremendous start. The Swampcats were victorious in 13 of their first 16 con- tests and started 2-0 in SCISA Region 3-AAAA. None of this has come as a surprise to second-year head coach **Patrick Anderson**.

“I think we’ve played up to our expectations so far,” Anderson said. “This group has continued to grow as the season has progressed, and that’s been encouraging. Overall, the effort and buy-in have been there, and that’s what we challenge our guys with daily.”

Laurence Manning returned four starters from last year’s 13-15 team in senior **Zy Dennis**, sophomore **Scoop Dennis**, senior **Charlie Duvall** and junior **Ben Sanders**. The Swampcats are going to have to make do without Scoop Dennis, who led them in scoring, re- bounding and steals last year, for a while though. He is out with a lower leg injury.

Laurence Manning had a big win over rival **Wilson Hall** on January 16, coming away with a 55-33 triumph. Junior **Wesley Lyles**, the newcomer to the starting lineup, led the Swampcats with 20 points. Duvall and Zy Dennis both had 10 and senior **Whitley Boykin** added eight.

Despite the loss of Scoop Dennis for the time being, Anderson thinks the Swampcats’ experience is a major benefit.

“Our biggest strength is our experience,” Anderson said. “We have a group that’s been through a lot of var- sity basketball, and that shows in how we handle differ- ent situations throughout a game.”

Other members of Region 3 along with LMA and Wilson Hall are **Camden Military**, **Hilton Head Christian Academy**, **John Paul II** and **Trinity Colle- giate**. To come away with a region crown, Anderson said the Swampcats have to be steady.

“To compete for a region title, we have to be consis- tent,” he said. “That means defending at a high level every night, valuing possessions and doing the little things that don’t always show up in the box score.”

LMA GIRLS OPEN REGION WITH WIN OVER WILSON HALL

The Laurence Manning girls basketball team opened its region schedule with a 53-32 victory over Wilson Hall. That helped the Lady ‘Cats, who played a difficult non-region schedule, improve to 6-7 overall.

Senior **Lyza Prickelmyer** was the star of the game for Laurence Manning with her 22-point effort. After scoring the first basket of the game, play was stopped at LMA’s **Bubba Davis Gymnasium** to honor Prick- elmyer for going over 1,000 points for her career. She actually did that earlier in the week on the road against **Orangeburg Prep**.

Prickelmyer has been setting the pace for the Lady ‘Cats all season. She was averaging 17.0 points, 6.1 rebounds and 4.2 assists, all team highs. She was also averaging 2.1 steals.

Ashley Rae Hodge, another senior 4-year starter like Prickelmyer, led the team in steals at 2.8. She was also averaging 13.4 points, 2.0 rebounds and 2.6 as- sist.

Hodge had 13 points against Wilson Hall, while sen- ior **Lily Wellborn** added 12.

Laurence Manning head coach **Lisa Ard** said there is still plenty of room for improvement available to her team.

“We are adjusting to each other,” said Ard, who is in her second year in charge of the program. “We’re still not playing as well as I think we can. We need to make layups, 2-footers and free throws. We can get the ball where we need to but don’t capitalize on all the oppor- tunities we have.

“Our athleticism is our strength. We are fast and ath- letic. We just could use a lot more basketball knowledge in a lot of situations.

The other two members of Laurence Manning’s all- senior starting lineup are **Maggie Welch** and **Marlee Black**.

NOONAN STEPS DOWN AS LMA FOOTBALL COACH

Laurence Manning is again in search of a new foot- ball coach after **Jimmy Noonan** tendered his resigna- tion in the middle of December after one year as head coach.

The resignation was immediate for Noonan, who was also the middle school principal.

A letter sent out by LMA to its families stated: “We want to share an update with you regarding a transition in our school leadership. Effective yesterday, Coach Jimmy Noonan has stepped down from his roles at Lau- rence Manning Academy as Middle School Principal and Head Football Coach.

“While we are saddened to see him move on, we are deeply grateful for the devotion he has poured into our school. Coach Noonan has been an incredible blessing to this campus. He is a man of deep integrity, unwaver- ing character, and genuine faith. His leadership, mentor- ship, and quiet strength have shaped not only our football program this year, but also the lives of count- less Swampcats.

“Please join us in wishing Coach Noonan the very best as he begins his next chapter. We are thankful for all he has contributed to LMA, and we look forward to continuing to support one another as a strong and united school family.”

Laurence Manning will be looking for its fifth head coach in four years. **Will Furse** was the head coach in 2023 before ending his 2-year stint with his resignation. **Robbie Briggs** was hired to replace him but stepped down in the middle of last season. Patrick Anderson was the interim head coach for the rest of the 2024 cam- paign.

Noonan led the Swampcats to a 6-5 overall record. They got to host a playoff game in the first round of the SCISA AAAA state playoffs but lost to **Porter-Gaud** 13-6 in the first round

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Camden girls, boys hoops teams start strong

By Dennis Brunson
hssr.com Associate Editor
Camden – The **Camden High School** girls bas- ketball team won its first 12 games of the season be- fore falling to **South Pointe** 75-63 on January 7.

Bulldogs head coach **Lewis Mungo** likes where his team is at though as it prepares to hit the meat of its Region 3-AAAA schedule.

“This is about what we expected,” said Mungo, who is in his second season as head coach. “We’re doing exactly what we knew we could do. We just didn’t have an inside presence last year.”

CHS went 17-7 and tied for second in the region behind South Pointe, which played for the upper state title. Camden does have someone to work in- side this year in 6-foot-1-inch center **Ayona Alexan- der**.

A **Tennessee State** commitment, Alexander came from Legion Collegiate in Rock Hill. She is averaging a double-double of 16.2 points and 11.2 rebounds per game o go with 3.2 assists, 2.8 steals and 1.8 blocked shots.

She joined four returning starters led by the coach’s daughter, junior Braylin Mungo. Selected to the South Carolina Basketball Coaches Association AAAA All-State team last year, Mungo is averaging 12.0 points, 3.3 rebounds 5.2 assists and 3.7 steals.

The other returning starters are junior Harmony Jefferson, junior Jillian Rush and junior Shanaryah Wright. Rush is averaging 11.2 points, 6.5 rebounds and 3.1 steals, Jefferson is averaging 10.9 points and 2.4 steals, and Wright is averaging 5.5 points, 5.3 rebounds, 2.3 assists and 2.3 steals.

Key contributors off the bench are eighth-grrader Jocelyn Dupree sophomore Laikahlanii Seegars and junior Laila Selby-Blaylock. Seegars is averaging

5.1 points, Dupree 3.2 points and Selby-Blaylock 4.2 points and 3.2 rebounds.

“We have four starters and four new players,” Coach Mungo said. “We’re trying to build chem- istry, working to have the we-over-me mentality. It sometimes looks easy, but these girls work really, really hard behind the scenes.

“I feel like the only thing that can stop us is us.”

CAMDEN BOYS START 11-4

The Camden boys basketball team is off to an 11-4 start, the most games it has won in now its fourth season under head coach Sterling Council. He hopes this is just the tip of the iceberg in regards to success for the Bulldogs though as they delve into region play.

“We’ve exceeded my expectations so far,” Council said. “We’ve done better than I expected. I just wanted them to believe we could win some games.

“Nothing we’ve done to this point matters be- cause we’re in region play. We’re tTrying to accom- plish sone team goals we want to.”

CHS is doing this with just one returning starter in 6-4 senior center Derrick Loney. He is averaging 6.3 points, 5.5 rebounds and 1.3 blocks.

Eighth-grader Jayden Lewis is the leading scorer with an average of 13.6 to go with a team high 2.6 steal. Junior Tyriek Jones Is averaging 12.5 points.

“Jayden has showed so much poise and charisma,” Council said. “We know what we had in him, but we didn’t expect him to be playing at this level this soon. He got a lot of confidence over the summer and that has carried into the season.”

The other starters are senior Jahleel Gaines and



2025-26 Carvers Bay Bears basketball

Carvers Bay looking to make deep play off run

By Neill Kirkpatrick
Special to the HSSR

Hemingway – The Carvers Bay Bears entered the 2025/26 season with high expectations as they returned their top three scorers from last season but head coach **Jeff Mezzatesta** felt it could take a few games to gel because the Bears football season did not end until the third round of the class A playoffs.

“Our biggest challenge at the start of the season was getting our football players back after their great season. We have a lot of athletes that play both sports and we were behind in conditioning, chem- istry, etc.. to start the basketball season,” said coach Mezz.

Coach continued, “We probably won’t start gelling as a team until after the Holiday Break, un- less our seniors can provide the leadership that is needed for early season success. If we can come to- gether and grow we have a chance to have a very special season. We just have to weather the early

season with a few football injuries to nurse and bringing the boys back together as a family.”

The Bears lost in the third round of the class A playoffs to eventual state champion Denmark-Olar. They finished the year 20-9 and 12-0 in region play to win their second consecutive region champi- onship. They entered the season on a 16-game re- gion winning streak.

The Bears are currently ranked number six in the latest HSSR class a poll. They started the season 1-2 but have gone 12-2 since including running their re- gion winning streak to 21 after winning their first five region games. They also own a win over the HSSR’s number five team Latta 81-73 which put Latta in second place in the region race. The two teams will meet again at Latta on February 11th in game that could decide the region title and a possi- ble number one seed in the playoffs; however, there is a lot of basketball left to play.

The strength of the Bears is in their guard play

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6-4 senior Marcus Clark. Gaines leads in steals at 2.6 to go with 9.5 points and 2.2 assists, while Clark is averaging 7.1 points and 3.5 rebounds.

Key contributors coming off the bencha re senior sixth man Jay Cook, junior Hayden Williams, 6-4 junior Will Haunert and 6-5 junior Ethan Spitler. Cook is averaging 6.4 points, Haunert 2.8 points, 3.3 rebounds and 1.0 blocks, Spitler 6.0 points and 2.9 rebounds and Williams 2.4 points.

“I knew I had some talent this year,” Council said. “This is the most talent since I’ve been here. The biggest thing is building chemistry. This is the deep- est I’ve been. We’re a well-balanced team.”

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on both sides of the court as their pressure defense turns into instant offense. Senior **KK Heyward** and juniors **Jamie Graham** and **Mekhi Bromell** are the leaders of the team as they have each improved their game from last season.

Heyward is a two-times All State selection. The senior is the unquestioned team leader and has upped his scoring average his year he has been on the team. He led the team in scoring last year at 15.7 ppg and is second this season at 16.4 ppg. He is on pace to top 1500 career points by the end of the season. On the defensive side, he leads the team in steals with 3.2 a night.

Graham has taken his game to the next level as he leads the team in scoring, rebounding and assists. His scoring average has increased from 11.4 ppg to 18.3 ppg and he is on pace to become another 1000 career point scorer. His 5.8 rebounds per is tied for the top spot and he is dishing out 4.1 dimes a game.

See **Carver’s Bay**, pg. 69

White Knoll boys looking to improve this winter

By **WORTHY EVANS**
Special to the **HSSR**

Lexington - The 2025-2026 boys basketball season is not the third-year scenario that Hall of Fame Head Coach **Willie Thomas** expected.

The Timberwolves, 8-10 and 1-2 in Region 5-5A, lost several players from graduation or school transfers going into this season. The players remaining on the roster, Thomas said, are good kids but need more playing time, and those who would be leaders need to step up their leadership.

“Right now we’re in a situation where I’m not playing kids when they’re not coming to practice,” Thomas said. “A lot of coaches don’t do that but the expectations are a little different here. We expect them to dress a certain way and behave in a certain way. Winning and losing is secondary to being committed to the team. Having been around for a while, I pretty much have an idea on how to win, and these kids need to put in the work.”

Thomas owns the latter part of that statement. Over four decades of coaching, he has won more than 600 games as coach at seven schools, won two Class A state championships at **Bowman High** and three Class 3A state titles at **Holly-Hill Roberts** in 1996-1997 and 1999. He coached at **Orangeburg-Wilkinson** from 2017-2023, leading the Bruins to the 3A state championship game in 2022 and the lower-state title game in 2021 and 2023.

After a 12-15 mark in 2023, White Knoll went 13-14 in Thomas’s second year. The record wasn’t stellar, but he said the team was set to improve greatly this season with a lot of returners from a

young team.

Unfortunately for the Timberwolves, two top performers transferred—sophomore **Bryson Schofield**, who averaged 13.3 points per game, went to the No.4 3A team **Keenan**, where he averages 9.4 points and 8.8 rebounds per game, and junior **Cylan McLeod**, who averaged 6.6 points per game last year, transferred to **Westwood** and is the third-best scorer on the No.2 team in 5A Division 2 with 10.6 points per game.

With those two players off the roster, **Peyton Jennings** has become the team’s top scorer with 18.4 points and 6.2 rebounds per game. Getting Jennings to fully commit to being the team’s leader has been difficult, Thomas said.

“Jennings could be a really special player, but it’s just getting him to understand that he has to lead, and you can’t lead if you’re not there (at practice) or if you’re late,” Thomas said. “He has a bright future if he learns to do those things, and he’s a good kid.”

Behind Jennings is fellow junior **Tyzai Smith**, who averages 9.8 points and 4.6 rebounds. After those players, the statistics drop off among the rest of the roster.

“You try your best to get them the opportunity to play because they earned that opportunity, but sometimes they’re not at the level in which we can compete and beat quality teams,” Thomas said. “All the guys say we want a chance to win, but the guys have got to hold their teammates accountable, or we’ll continue to have the same problems.”

See **White Knoll**, pg. 69

Northwood Academy girls focused on title run

By **Billy G. Baker**
Publisher

Summerville—Give **Northwood Academy** girls’ basketball coach **Ginnell Curtis** credit for scheduling top teams this season and the 18-1 Lady Chargers are the clear favorites to bring home the SCISA AAAA state title when the gold medal round is played at the Sumter Civic Center in early March.

Northwood Academy’s most recent win came over region rival **First Baptist**, 67-59 to take control of the region.

“We got up 26-6 after the first period against First Baptist and then we lost our focus,” said Charger head coach **Ginnell Curtis** who won her 200th career game at Northwood **Ashley Hall** on Jan. 8. “We missed some lay-ups also. We also got into some foul trouble so we could not play as aggressively on defense as we are used to.

“When we go over there later in the season we will need to play much harder,” said Coach Curtis. “We’ll look at the film and see what adjustments we need to make. They are a good basketball team. We feel good about being one up in the region race right now.”

Against First Baptist junior prospect combo guard **Maliyah Birch** scored 23 points and had 8 assists while senior guard **Jada Bates** contributed 19 points with six assists.

The Chargers last won the SCISA state title in 2017, and this year’s team should have every opportunity to win the gold medal round again.” We played a tough schedule because our region is not that competitive top to bottom and we needed to face tougher teams to get ready for the playoffs,” said Coach Curtis. “This team is a close-knit group, and everyone gets along really well. They support each other in practice and in games and I feel like everyone likes each other.”

Coach Curtis said defense is the staple of her coaching philosophy. “Great defense is the key to

being a good team,” she said. “Our objective is to make our opponents as uncomfortable as we can by making physical man-to-man defense with a lot of full court pressure. We take a lot of pride in being a good defensive team.”

The team’s only loss this season (71-61) was to the tradition rich **Bolles School** from Jacksonville, Florida, at home on January 3, in a highly competitive game. The Chargers have defeated teams like **Ashley Ridge** (80-39), **Bishop England** (59-24), **Stratford** (75-18) **Oceanside Collegiate** (75-46), and **Keenan** (53-38).

They have also beat **Berkeley** (55-53), the defending SCHSL Div. II champions this season. Their most recent win came over region rival First Baptist (67-59) that gave them a leg up in the region race. Those two teams will meet again at First Baptist on February 6.

Birch is the top-rated player in SCISA, and she is currently averaging 19.2 points, 6.9 rebounds, 4.8 assists and 4.9 steals a game. These are the kind of all-around stats that attract the attention of college coaches for sure.

Bates, a transfer from Alabama, is a prospect in her own right. Bates is averaging 16.2 points, 2.8 rebounds, 3.8 assists and 4.0 steals a game.

Through 19 games the Chargers have outscored teams 1,174 to 499. They are averaging 18.9 steals a game on defense and they average 13.3 assists a game as a team. They are a solid well-coached team.

Freshman guard **Kylee Clark** is contributing 10.7 points a game and 5.4 rebounds a game. Her defense has been stellar also with 3.8 steals a game. Senior small forward Alyvia Toco has been on the Charger team for four years and she is contributing 7.5 points, 4.1 rebounds and 3.2 steals a game.

Freshman SG **Lauren Cosman** is one of the subs in and she is averaging 4.6 and 2.2 rebounds a game. Other hard-working members of the team include 5-10 8th grader McKinley Alexander, senior

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forward Isabella Heaton, freshman PF/C Sarah Font, and junior PF Ella Bennett Rogers.

The team has 9 games remaining in the regular season. They host Palmetto Christian on January 20 before playing consecutive road games at Ashley Hall and Pinewood Prep on the 22nd and 23rd. The Chargers host West Ashley on the 27th to close out the month of January.

On February 3 they host **Porter-Gaud**, then travel to **First Baptist** for a region showdown game on the 6th. They are at Palmetto Christian on the before hosting **Pinewood** on the 13th. They close out the regular season on February 16 at **St. Johns Christian**.

Ryan Meadows coaches the Northwood Academy boys’ team.

As of Jan. 16, the Chargers are (6-8, 0-2). They are led in scoring by junior guard **Eli Cosman** (15.4 pts), senior guard **Elyjah Oler** (12.5 pts), and senior F **Drew Wolfe** (7.1 pts).

Florence Area Feature Page

Leonard leading the way for Wilson basketbal

By **Dennis Brunson**
hssr.com Associate Editor

Florence – Being a contender for a state title on a year-in, year-out basis is expected for the **Wilson High School** boys basketball team. Tigers head coach **Yusuf English** likes where his team stands at the moment.

“I believe we’re right at our expectations overall,” said English, whose team is 12-6 overall and 4-1 in Region 5-A AAAA. “We’ve had some really strong moments that show what we’re capable of, and there are still areas we’re continuing to clean up.

What I’m most pleased with is the growth. The guys are competing, buying into what we’re teaching and getting better game by game. I think that consistency is the next step for us, but the foundation is where it needs to be.”

Wilson, which is ranked fifth in the most recent **High School Sports Report** AAAA boys basketball poll, is led by 6-foot-7-inch junior guard **Josh Leonard**. Selected as one of the top players in the state regardless of classification by the **South Carolina Basketball Coaches Association**, Leonard is averaging a double-double of 20.9 points per game and 11.7 rebounds. He’s also averaging 2.6 assists, 3.1 steals and 1.4 blocked shots.

“Josh has made tremendous strides,” English said. “His confidence has grown, and you can really see

the game slowing down for him. He’s making better decisions, impacting the game on both ends of the floor, and embracing his role as a leader.

“The most impressive thing is his work ethic. He’s committed to improving every day, and that’s translating into real production and presence on the court.”

Leonard’s teammate, **KJ Allen**, was selected as one of the top five seniors in AAAA. He’s averaging 10.3 points and 5.9 rebounds.

Junior **Isaiah Addison** is also scoring in double figures with an 11.7 average.

The Wilson girls are ranked 10th in the latest **HSSR** poll. The Tigers are 10-4 overall and 3-2 in region play.

Wilson has three players averaging in double figures in senior **Zoe Miller**, sophomore **A’Raina Ross** and junior **Logan Murray**.

Miller leads the team in both scoring and steals with averages of 14.1 and 3.6, respectively. She’s also averaging 4.4 rebounds and 1.5 assists.

Ross leads in assists at 2.0 while scoring at a 12.4

See **Florence Area**, pg. 69

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Florence Christian’s Schwab wins defensive award

By **Dennis Brunson**
hssr.com Associate Editor

Florence – **Florence Christian School** junior defensive lineman **Hayden Schwab** was selected as the SCISA Region 2-AAA Defensive Player of the Year.

Schwaub, who was the only returning starter on the D line for the FCS football team, had team highs in tackles with 97, tackles for loss with 11 ½ and quarterback sacks with eight, returned an interception 43 yards for a touchdown, caused two fumbles

and recovered another.

The Eagles finished the year with an 8-3 overall record and reached the semifinals of the state play-offs. Veteran head coach **Neil Minton** was pleased with the team’s performance.

“We had a great season,” Minton said. “We played five games against teams who played for state titles (AAA state champion **Pinewood Prep** in the semifinals, AAA runner-up and region foe **Wilson Hall**, AAAA runner-up **Heathwood Hall**, AA

See **Florence Christian**, pg. 71

Lamar boys hitting stride during region play

By **Dennis Brunson**
hssr.com Associate Editor

Lamar – The **Lamar High School** boys basketball team split its first 16 games. Ah, but how about that Region 2-Class A schedule?

The Silver Foxes are 6-2, which is good for second place behind 7-0 **C.A. Johnson**. With it being a 9-team region, there are still eight games left to play, but LHS is in a position for one of the top two spots and home playoff games that come with it.

Head coach **Brian Scott** is not surprised with his team’s performance to date.

“We have played about what I expected,” Scott said. “I knew coming into the season that we would be better and have a chance to be competitive. We played some good competition in our non-region that would make us better come region time. It’s paying off so far.”

Lamar has two returning starters and are led by 6-foot-6-inch sophomore **Lamont Williams**. He is averaging a double-double of 14.1 points per game and 11.5 rebounds, both team highs. He also leads in assists at 3.1 and is tied for the lead in steals at 2.6.

The other returning starter is senior **Kamil McCoy**, who is averaging 7.2 points and 2.0 steals. Sophomore **Davaris Lambert** is one of the other three starters and is averaging 13.4 points, 3.8 rebounds and two assists.

The other starters are senior **Zori Pierce**, who shares the steals lead and averages 5.8 points, and

freshman **Ziggy Durant**, who is averaging 7.3 points and 5.3 rebounds.

Providing meaningful minutes off the bench are senior **Nick Eaddy**, junior **Juelz Jones**, freshman **Gavin Satterfield** and junior **Messiah Sims**. Eaddy is averaging 2.6 points, Jones 3.5 points, Satterfield 3.2 points and 3.6 rebounds and Sims 3.4 points,

Much of the basketball team played on the football team that competed in the Class state championship game. Scott hopes that proves to be a benefit come playoff time.

“We need to just keep getting better overall,” he said. “We played for the state championship in football and got off to a late start with basketball because the majority of the team was playing. We’ve been able to get some much needed practice over the Christmas break to fine-tune everything and it’s paying off. We want to keep the momentum going from football and make a run into the state tournament.

“If we take care of the ball, control the boards, defend and make free throws, we will have a chance to win every game.”

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2025-26 Berkeley Girls Basketball

Berkeley girls hoops gearing up for another run

By David Shelton
Senior Writer
Moncks Corner – After winning the first state championship in school history last season, the **Berkeley High** girls basketball team is gearing up for a repeat run at the title this season.

Berkeley finished last year with 22 wins and won the AAAAA Division II state championship. The Stags return enough talent and experience to be a contender again this winter. They have been ranked in the top four of the statewide rankings all season and have a 13-4 record to start the season. The losses have come to very good teams, including a loss in region 7-A AAAA play to the current No. 1 ranked Goose Creek Gators.

Cane Bay basketball teams competing in region

By David Shelton
Senior Writer
Summerville – As of mid-January, the basketball teams at **Cane Bay High** are getting into the thick of things in region 7-A AAAA and both teams aim to contend for a top four finish in the competitive league.

After three region games, the boys team was 2-1 while the girls team was 1-2. The boys team is one of the top teams in the state, ranking as high as fourth in the statewide rankings of Class AAAAA Division I. Coach **Shawn McKeen**’s squad won 17 of their first 19 games overall.

With a bevy of talent and experience returning from a 20-win team of last season, the boys basketball team has high expectations for the 2025-26 season.

“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 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 needed.

Leading the way is sophomore **Jamel McKinley**, a 6-7 guard who averages 11.6 points and 5.9 rebounds per game this season. Junior **Jaleel Sanders** returns at point guard as a third-year varsity player. He fills up the stat sheet with 10.6 points, 4.0 re-

Coach **Crystal Peace**, a former all-state player for Berkeley, says her team is realizing what it means to have the target on their backs.

“We get everyone’s best shot, which should be expected,” Peace said. “It takes a level of mental toughness when you’re a defending state champion. We’ve talked about it as a team. The important thing is to focus on us and do the things that we have to do to improve every day. We’re doing that. We’re work-

See **Berkeley**, pg. 68

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bounds, 4.6 assists and 2.7 steals per game this season.

The lone starting senior is **Amare Merrell**, good for 9.7 points per game, while junior center **Jackson Lilly** averages 6.8 points and 6.0 boards per game. The fifth starter is 6-4 power forward **Christian Davis**, who is averaging 6.4 points and 5.2 rebounds per contest.

Rounding out the 25-26 roster are seniors **Tristan Ford** (6.9 ppg), **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. This is a confident group and they want to do special things.”

The girls team, coached by **Ira Owens**, knocked off Stratford on Jan. 16 to earn their first region win after losing their first two league games to ranked Goose Creek and Wando. The Cobras improved to 7-11 overall with that win.

Junior **Jalisa Craft** leads the team in scoring at 9.1 points per game. Junior point guard **Jasmine Dargan** averages 7.8 points and freshman **Malorie Quigley** averages 6.0 points per game.

The only senior on the roster this season is **Chloe Newton**. Other juniors are **De’Zyre Smalls**, **Niya Bryant**, **Lauren Reid** and **Kelsei Grant**.

Rounding out the roster are sophomore **Rylie Crain** and **Zora Waring**, freshmen **Cailyn Owens**

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and Kellie Anderson, and seventh-grader **Bella Mitchum**.

Kingstree girls having another strong season

By Dennis Brunson
hssr.com Associate Editor
Kingstree – The **Kingstree High School** girls basketball team is on a roll.

After losing their first two games of the season, the Blazers reeled off 12 consecutive victories. Five of those came in Region 7-AA.

The winning streak was snapped though with a 32-27 loss to **Atlantic Collegiate Academy** on January 16. Despite that, Kingstree head coach **James Price** believes he has a much better team now than when the winning streak began.

“I think we have come a long way since the early part of the season,” Price said. “We have developed some great team chemistry on the defensive end of the floor. We stay connected and communicate well.

“On the offensive end, we are an unselfish bunch. When we are patient and move the ball, we typically come away with a great shot.”

Leading the way for Kingstree is junior **Nay’dia Shaw**. She is averaging a double-double with a scoring average of 18.5 points per game and a rebounding average of 10.3 Those are team highs as well as her 5.6 assists, 5.1 steals and 1.1 blocked shots.

Price doesn’t mince words when it comes to his opinion on Shaw.

“Nay’dia Shaw is the best basketball player in AA,” Price said. “She can affect winning in various ways. Obviously, her scoring ability is elite. She is a 3-level scorer and a top-notch free throw shooter.

“But what really makes her special is her basketball IQ and court vision. She is so unselfish and gets a joy out of making her teammates better. Currently she leads us in scoring, rebounding, assists and steals. She came into the season wanting to be more dominant and consistent on the defensive end of the floor, and she has risen to the challenge of being a great 2-way player.”

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Chesterfield hoopsters competing well this year

By David Shelton
Senior Writer
Chesterfield – Region play is the most important part of the regular season and ramping up the intensity and focus is paramount for any team hoping to contend for a region title and state playoff berth.

To that end, a young but up and coming **Chesterfield** girls basketball team is competing well in the early part of their 2025-26 region 4-AA schedule. The Lady Rams won four of their first six region games and were 10-7 overall this season as of Jan. 18. The team won 11 games all of last season.

“We are playing pretty well so far,” said head coach **Nick Jolly** earlier this season. “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 the potential.”

Chesterfield regularly starts four sophomores and 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 and eight rebounds per game. This season, she is averaging 14.6 points and 9.6 rebounds per game. She also dishes 3.4 assists per game and has nearly three steals per contest.

Robinson averaged 13.9 points last season and is at 15.9 points per game this season. Eighth-grader **Le’Asia Brown** is leading the team in rebounds, grabbing 9.9 boards per game while scoring 6.7 re-

Senior **Demia Mosley** is also averaging in double figures in scoring at 12.7 to go with 2.6 assists and 2.6 steals. Senior **Nyla Wallace** is averaging 7.5 points, senior **Toshonda White** is averging 4.4 points and junior **Kamarie McCrea** is averaging 4.3 points, 3.1 steals and 4.0 rebounds.

KINGSTREE BOYS STRUGGLING

It’s not been an easy go of it for the Kingstree boys basketball team. The Blazers won only four of their first 17 games and started 0-5 in region play.

“We have not played up to our own potential,” said Kingstree head coach **Shawn Evans**. “Al-though we have not had our full team, this year has been a great opportunity for ‘next man up.’ A few of our players are still recovering from injuries they endured during football season.”

The starting lineup is made up of senior **BJ Washington**, junior **Joshua Brown**, junior **Jo-h’Metrius Chandler**, sophomore **Paul McKnight** and sophomore **Zy’Marreon McKnight**.

Members of the rotation are sophomore **Kayden Scott**, sophomore **Breeton McClary** and sophomore **Tyler Murray**.

Kingstree has struggled putting up points, averaging just 41.8. Brown was leading the way with a 10.7 average, and Scott was in double figures at an even 10.0. Washington was averaging 6.8 and Paul McKnight was at 4.1.

With a 7-team region, five teams will qualify for the state playoffs, so the door is still open for Kingstree. Evans said his team has to come out of the gate faster.

“We have to get off to a stronger start to the first half of our games to help us secure a win,” Evans said. “We are beating ourselves with our turnovers. The upside is through our trials and tribulations our chemistry is growing stronger and leaders are starting to emerge.”

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bounds per contest this season. Sophomore **Ki’Yonna Peurifoy** is pulling down 7.0 rebounds per contest while senior **Jordan Evans** is adding 2.6 steals and nearly two assists per game.

Sophomore **Alivia Honeycutt** scores about three points and pulls down 4.5 rebounds per game. She also averages close to four blocked shots per outing. Sophomore **Tayler McCoy** is adding six points per game. Senior **Jaylen Evans**, along with junior **Kaylee Leonard**, see considerable minutes as well. Freshman **Taylee Clyburn**, sophomore **Ava Knight**, freshman **Kamari Patterson**, freshman **Al-lison Brown**, and senior **Jenna Kelly** round out this year’s squad.

Jolly says his biggest point of emphasis in the early season has been physical toughness.

“With the youth, sometimes they play a little timid,” the coach said. “I keep telling them we have to play tougher. They are responding well. I’m 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 we play.”

The boys team went 1-12 against non-region competition in December but is showing solid growth in region play with an early 2-2 record.

Senior leaders and team captains are **Kamron Patterson**, **Derrick Lockhart**, **Ronnie Little** and **Josh Miller**. Juniors include **Amir Pickett**, **Jackson Dalton**, **Mark Moten**, **Josh Bittle**, **Jayden Johnson**, **Treyvon Smith** and **DJ Merriman**.

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ing out the roster are sophomores **Jamison Dalton** and **Holden Lowry**.

ORANGEBURG PREP INDIANS



2025-26 Orangeburg Prep girls basketball

Orangeburg Prep girls having another strong year

By Dennis Brunson
hssr.com Associate Editor

Orangeburg – The **Orangeburg Preparatory School** girls basketball team came into the season with four new starters. No worries though. The Indians are having another tremendous season.

Orangeburg Prep owns a 13-3 record and was on an 11-game winning streak following a 60-23 victory over **Spartanburg Christian Academy** on January 17. Indians head coach **Jan Stoudenmire** is happy with her team’s performance to date. “Our team is always playing very hard,” said Stoudenmire. “I think we’re progressing very well and getting better and getting accustomed to playing with each other.”

Senior **Hannah Lambrecht** is the lone returning starter from last year’s team that went 24-2 and lost to **Pee Dee Academy** in the SCISA AA state championship game. The newcomers to the lineup are senior **Kate Holstein** and senior **Prestan Schuriknight** in the forward spots. The guards are senior **Jayme Culler** and junior **Mary Legare Delaney**.

Coming off the bench as the sixth man is sophomore **Gee Gee Riley**.

The Indians are averaging 52.1 points a game and have been stout defensively. They are giving up 30.4 a game,

Orangeburg Prep is part of Region 1, which has only four members. With **Clarendon Hall** not having varsity basketball this season, there are only three schools playing basketball, the other two being **Calhoun Academy** and **Thomas Sumter Academy**.

That means the Indians will only have four region contests. The goal for Stoudenmire is to have her team playing its best basketball coming down the homestretch.

“As always you have to be playing your best basketball during state tournament time,” she said. “You want to try to keep the injuries away, you want to stay hungry and having the will to win plays a big part.”

Stoudenmire said coming so close to winning state last year is not being used as a motivational factor.

“We’re not even thinking about a state championship,” she said. “We’re just trying to go 1-0 every game. We have only one returning starter from last year’s team. We’re just trying to figure it out and take every game one by one.”

OP BOYS HOOPS STARTS 5-9

Like the girls, the Orangeburg Prep boys basketball team has just one returning starter from last

year’s team that reached the semifinals of the AAA state tournament. The Indians boys are struggling more so than the girls, winning just five of their first 14 games.

Injuries and sickness have been a hindrance in the team’s development, according to head coach **Michael Delaney**. However, Delaney likes the progress the team is making.

“We’ve pulled up two more junior varsity players, one of which is now a starter,” Delaney said. We are currently starting four sophomores and a senior. Outside of that, we are developing well and I see the improvement in the team chemistry.

“I have noticed the last two to three games that we are developing more consistency in scoring outside of just **Avery Ravenell**. We have had four people in double figures the last two games. The boys are doing a good job rebounding as well.”

Ravenell is the lone returning starter and one of two seniors on the team. He is the only double-figure scorer, averaging 23.0 points per game. He also leads the team in assists at 4.1 and steals at 3.1 while pulling down 5.4 rebounds.

The four sophomores who are starting along with Ravenell are **Cholly Williams**, **Council Burroughs**, **Dakota Boan** and **Aarav Patel**.

Williams is leading the Indians in rebounding with a 10.6 average while scoring at a 7.3 clip. Burroughs is the second leading scorer with an 8.9 average to go along with 2.8 rebounds and 2.0 assists.

Patel brings Orangeburg Prep some size down low with his 6-foot-4-inch frame. He is using it to block 2.2 shots per game while grabbing 5.4 rebounds and scoring 5.1 points. Boan is averaging 4.4 points, 4.3 rebounds and 2.1 steals.

The Indians have also been getting contributions from the likes of freshman **Toddy McElhone**, senior **J’Syri Parker**, junior **Parker Gray** and freshman **Cam Jolley**.

McElhone was averaging 8.0 points and 3.0 rebounds while Parker was averaging 9.8 rebounds and 4.6 points. The 6-4 Jolley is averaging a block a game.

Delaney said Orangeburg Prep needs to continue to get major contributions up and down the lineup if it is to get things in order coming down the final half of the season.

“We need to continue to see four to five players scoring in double figures,” said Delaney, who is in his second year as head coach. “We cannot just depend on two to three players to put all the points on the board.

“We also need to develop some depth from our bench players. Freshman **Toddy McElhone** was

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moved up from JV and has helped add some consistency from the outside.”

With such a young team though, Delaney knows the consistent thing he might see from the Indians is its display of in consistency.

“Once we got back from the holiday break you could see that various players were embracing what we have been asking them to do and playing to their individual strengths. We are still in growth mode, however, being so young.

“I feel like on any given night we could beat the best team in the league, and at the same time we could lose to the worst team in the league.”

Timberland boys hoops heating up in second half

By Rob Gantt
Special to The HSSR

St. Stephen - The **Timberland High School** boys basketball team seems to be heating up just as the weather turns cooler, when the games become more important.

The Wolves started out 0-13 on the season but were competitive most nights during the opening stretch. They dropped seven games by single digits the first half of the campaign.

However, Coach **Jerome Stewart**’s club has won three of its last four games. All three victories came on the road. Most recently, the Wolves edged Andrews, 47-41.

Junior guard **Joshua Deas** led the Wolves with 16 points, while sophomore forward **Jordan Gorham** added nine points. Sophomore wing **Ellis Wiggins** and senior wing **Kevin Brown** chipped in eight points apiece.

Gorham, also one of the state’s top football prospects, led around the glass with seven rebounds and four blocked shots. Wiggins also contributed five rebounds, six assists, three steals and two blocks.

Timberland improved to 2-1 in Region 6-2A games heading into a road clash Tuesday, Jan. 20, at fellow Berkeley County School District program Philip Simmons.

Three days earlier, Timberland also won a tight contest at Academic Magnet. The Wolves pulled out a 59-53 victory versus the Raptors.

Wiggins led three Wolves in double figures with 12 points. Junior guard **Joshua Brown** and Kevin Brown added 11 points and 10 points, respectively. Senior forward **Harold Sanders** contributed nine points.

Gorham and Kevin Brown tallied 10 rebounds apiece, while Gorham and Wiggins



Joshua Brown

combined on five blocks.

Timberland broke through for its first win of the 2025-26 season Jan. 6 at Military Magnet, getting past the Eagles by a score of 62-52.

Wiggins and Kevin Brown poured in 18 points each and Sanders chipped in seven points. Wiggins also grabbed nine rebounds and dished out four assists.

In between that win and the most recent back-to-back victories, the Wolves lost a competitive clash at home against Burke.

Wiggins and Kevin Brown combined for 28 points.

After Philip Simmons Jan. 20, the Wolves host Woodland Jan. 23.

Cavaliers looking to finish strong on hardwood

By Neill Kirkpatrick
Special to the HSSR

Moncks Corner – Head coach **Bob Winters** knew coming into this season that his Cavaliers could have a special season because he had seen his team grow over the past two years into a solid basketball team that learned how to handle adversity and had become solid on both ends of the court.

The Cav’s are currently 13-6 overall and 3-1 in region play. Their losses have all come against top teams in their respective classes

The team is led by six seniors with three of them being captains in **Thomas Hester**, **Tradd Laws**, and **Isiah Antley**. Hester leads the team in scoring at 23.2 points per game and in steals at 3.4 per game. He is second in rebounding at 7.6 and steals at 3.4 per contest.

“Besides 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 18.1 points per game. He is also averaging 4.7 rebounds, 2.1 assists and 2.5 steals a game. He leads the team in three-pointers with

30 and his shooting 54% from behind the arc. He played a lot of AAU ball over the summer and really improved his game this summer.

Antley (6-4,190) leads the team in rebounding and blocks per game at 9.8 and 2 respectively. He adds 6.3 points per game. He has a soft touch around the basket and cleans the glass on both sides of the court.

The teams most improved player is **Aiden McCoy** (5-10,165) and has become a solid third scoring option. He is averaging 8.6 points per game and 6 rebounds per game.

Senior **Jacob Glover** (6-1,165) is the Cav’s point guard and handles the ball and distributes it well. He leads the team with 2.8 assists a night while grabbing 5.4 rebound a game.

Dor Reichley (5-8,175) is the Cav’s 6th man. He can come in and play any position on the floor. He is second on the team in 3-point percentage shooting at 43% and is often called on to be the team’s defensive “stopper”.

The rest of Cav’s are underclassmen in sophomores **Quentin Grant**, **Will Droillet**, and **Grayson Reichley** and junior **Logan Colbert**.

The Cav’s have 10 games left with three being region contest. They have some tough

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Hawks wrestlers aiming high as season heats up

By Rob Gantt
Special to The HSSR
Hanahan - The **Hanahan High School** wrestling program has been a consistent winner over the years and is furthering that tradition this winter. The Hawks took a 16-5 record into the Region 6-3A team duals Jan. 21.

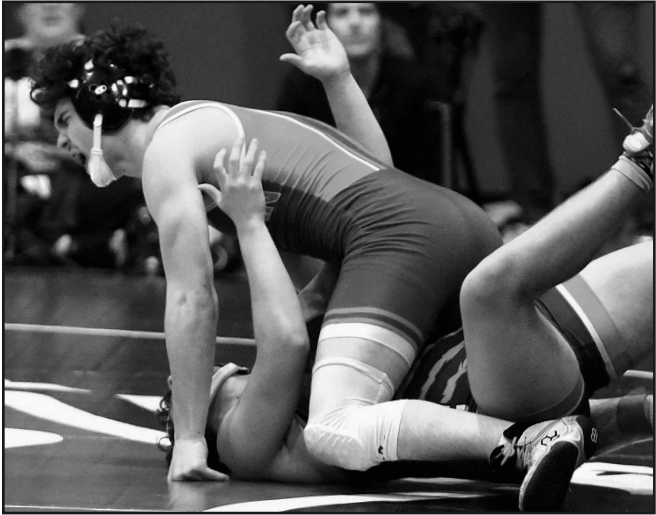
“These guys haven’t made any excuses,” long-time Hanahan wrestling coach **Ray Adkins** said. “No bones about it. These guys are here to compete this year. It’s exciting for the whole coaching staff... Several guys are flexible. They could go down a spot or bump up a spot. We’re going to try to have really good matchups.”

Senior **Jackson Stuckey** (144/150 pounds) is guiding the Hawks this winter. Stuckey has more than 100 career victories and won individual titles in the Hawk Invitational and Knights Open this month. Earlier, Stuckey was a runner-up in the US Army Shark Invitational at May River.

Eddie Yambao (113 pounds) is another senior with more than 100 career victories at Hanahan.

More returning state qualifiers from the 2024-25 squad are sophomore **Andy Avery** (106), junior **Jayden Serrano** (120), sophomore **Owen Miller** (138), junior **Trey Holcombe** (132), senior **Kayden Keitt** (144), senior **John Kanehl** (150), senior **Pedro Afonso** (157) and senior **Landen Ritchie** (175). More wrestlers getting time on the mat for the Hawks are senior **Junior Pichay** (120), sophomore **Fisher Teal** (132), freshman **Will Hair** (157), sophomore **Donovan Manigault** (190), senior **Josh Hill** (215) and freshman heavyweight **Joseph Ivey**.

“I’m expecting this team to make a deep run into the playoffs,” Adkins said. “I’m excited about it. I think we can do it. These guys have all done what



Senior Jackson Stuckey

we’ve asked of them as far as getting in the right weight class. Most of these guys were able and willing to drop to their lowest weight class so we could get our 14 best wrestlers on the mat. None of these guys took a selfish role and said no I’m not going to lose the weight, why can’t this guy lose the weight? Everybody really bought into the team. They realized it was best for the team to make that commitment to get to their lowest weight class.”

The Hawks shined in the individual region tournament Jan. 13 at HHS. They claimed nine individual region titles in 14 weight classes. The total was one more than the 2024-25 team earned.

Yambao won his fourth region title, while Stuckey and Ritchie claimed their third region crowns.

Pichay, Avery and Miller are two-time region champions. Holcombe, Afonso and Ivey won their first region titles.



2025-26 Cross Trojans Boys Basketball

Cross boys hoops aiming to make strong finish

By David Shelton
Senior Writer
Cross – Success in football has led to a slow start in boys basketball at **Cross High** but expect the Trojans to contend for a region title this season.

Most of the basketball team plays football and the Trojans advanced to the Lower State finals in football this season. The month of December was used to condition for basketball and develop chemistry. Coach **Chaquain Boone** says the team’s 4-6 start to the season does not worry him. He knows the talent and experience that he has on this year’s roster.

“When fully healthy and when we have everyone available, I feel confident that we will be able to compete with any team we play,” Boone said. “Being successful in football is a great thing for our kids to experience. Starting basketball a little later than most teams is okay. I know once we come together and gel as a team, we will be good. We’re into region play and I feel good about our chances of competing.”

The Trojans began region play with a win over Lowcountry Leadership and a three-point loss to one of the region favorites Scott’s Branch. Among the other five losses early on were a one-point loss to Swansea and a five-point loss to Lake Marion in non-region play in December.

This year’s team is led by returning all-state forward **Caden Ramsey**, who also is one of the state’s top football prospects. The 6-4, 205-pound Ramsey is averaging 13.3 points and 8.3 rebounds per game but has played only half the games due to postseason all-star football participation.

Sophomore point guard **Isaiah Wright** is the leading scorer early, averaging 18 points and 4.6 steals per game. Junior guard **Tyler Harris** averages 6.3 points per game and senior forward **Kenji Polite** adds 6.7 points and 7.8 rebounds per contest. The fifth starter is sophomore guard **Bernard Middleton**.

Boone goes deep into the bench, which helps his

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team use defensive pressure to create offensive opportunities. Getting time in reserve roles are seniors **Andrew Mack**, **Micah Dukes** and **William Grant**; and sophomores **Emory Murrell**, **Jerry Sweatman** and **Mike Young**.

“With the style we play, depth is important and we have pretty solid depth overall,” Boone said.

Hampton County rounding into playoff form

By Neill Kirkpatrick
Special to the HSSR
Varnville – The Hurricanes of Hampton County are 45-12/ 17-1 in their first two years of existence on the hardwood in class AA with one trip to the lower state championship game and a third round exit from the playoffs but the 2025/26 could be a special as Head Coach **Joshua James** returns his top six players and has added some young talent.

Also, this is the second year in coach James up-tempo offense and in your face man-to-man defense. The results have been exactly as coach James likes as the Hurricanes average 65 points a game while allowing only 42 points per game. They hit 60% of their shots from two-point range while hitting 43% from beyond the arc. The one area they need to improve in as a team is at the free throw line where they hit 55%.

The Hurricanes are currently sitting at 13-4/ 5-0. Two of their losses occurred while the football team was getting ready to play in the class AA state championship game. They could easily be undefeated as their losses were by 4,4,5, and 3 points. They are ranked third in the most recent HSSR AA basketball poll.

Coach James said “Our biggest goal is to put pressure on the ball, turn teams over and get lay ups. I’ve told the team from day one that defense travels so as long as we play with intensity from the start we will win a lot of games. We still have some work to do to get ready for the playoffs.”

Five of the six seniors start with four of them at the guard position in **Darius Brooks**, **Jaylen Singletary**, **Jaquan Solomon**, and **Desmond Mathis** and senior forward **Tyler Davis**. The sixth senior is

Tarell Grant, who comes off the bench. Brooks is a returning All State guard after averaging 17.7 points per game last season. He has picked up where he left off as he leads the Cane’s in points per game at 16.6 and rebounds pulling down 5.9. He is second on the team in 3-point shooting at 43% while leading the team at the line hitting 73% of his free throws and for good measure he is hitting 66% of his two-pointers. If he continues at his current scoring pace he will be the first Hurricane to score over 1000 points strictly as a Hurricane.

Singletary is back running the team as he missed a couple of extra games because of playing the Touchtone North/ South All Star football game. He leads the team in assists at two a game and in steals. He also averages 8.3 points per game. He is coming off a great football season where he led the state in rushing with 2482 yards while scoring 42 touchdowns.

Solomon led the team in scoring last season at 11.9 but he has been better this season averaging 12.9 points per game. He is also a returning All Region performer.

Davis is averaging 8.3 points per game and 4.6 rebounds per game while Mathis has been chipped in four points per game.

Sophomore **Maryln Adkins** has been a big surprise as he is averaging 10 points a game and is second on the team in rebounding at 5.3 per contest.

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Creech looking for more from Patrick Henry girls

By Dennis Brunson
hssr.com Associate Editor
Estill – The **Patrick Henry Academy** girls basketball team is off to a respectable 7-5 start with a 1-1 record in SCISA Region 4-AAA. However, Patriots head coach **Anthony Creech** was hoping for more.

“We haven’t played to what we expected,” Creech said. “The girls are still learning to trust each other. We have some special girls on this team. We’re working on just getting the girls on the same page, bringing more effort in the game.”

PHA has three senior starters in **Saquoia Sexton**, **Emilee Stanley** and **Sophie Westendorf** with Sexton and Stanley the only returning starters. The other starters are junior **Mills Lucas** and sophomore **Abbie Isham**.

The main players coming off the bench are sophomores **Maura Mathis** and **Sara Guty**.

Patrick Henry has no one averaging double figures in scoring but has several players who can provide points. Stanley is the leading scorer with an 8.8 points-per-game average. Sexton is at 7.5, Westendorf 7.3, Lucas 5.7, Mathis 5.3, Guty 4.8 and Isham 2.8.

“The big keys for a successful season is we have to be more consistent scoring,” Creech said. “Saquoia Sexton could be a big force in the middle for us, and Mills Lucas and Emilee Stanley can knock down the jumper.”

Sexton is the leading rebounder at 9.9 with Westendorf not far behind at 9.0. Mathis averages 6.6,

Stanley 5.5 and Guty 5.2. Sexton also leads in blocked shots at 1.6 and Mathis averages a block a game.

Stanley leads in assists at 2.5 and steals at 3.1. Lucas averages 2.4 assists.

Other members of the team are juniors **Ashley James**, **Brooke Wall** and **Kaitlyn Carrillo** and sophomore **Kinley Cook**.

INJURIES, ILLNESS HINDERING PHA BOYS

The PHA boys basketball team was 5-9 and 0-2 in region play. Head coach **Claude Terry** said injuries and sickness have hindered the team of late.

“**Daivon Glover**, our leading scorer, has reinjured an ankle,” Terry said. “Our top rebounder, **Jacob Corley**, recently injured his ankle. He has a severe sprain and is in a boot with crutches and out from 3-6 weeks. Our second leading scorer, **Tray Adkins**, has been fighting the flu and allergies and has missed a couple of games.”

Glover is averaging 19.6 points while Adkins averages 12.2 points and 9.2 rebounds. Corley averages 9.7 boards and 6.6 points.

Terry said junior **Scot Mizzell** has stepped forward, scoring 19 points in a game against Orangeburg Prep. He is averaging 8.4 points.

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Youngsters laying foundation at Thomas Heyward

By David Shelton
Senior Writer
Ridgeland – Small schools often go through cycles where the number of athletes decrease, which leads to a lack of success. But, as the numbers cycle upward, the teams experience more success.

At **Thomas Heyward Academy**, the girls basketball program is in such a cycle when it comes to older and more experienced players. A numbers crunch has forced the girls program to step back from varsity play and focus on the lower levels until the younger players grow and develop into varsity players.

The school is putting together a season this winter, a junior varsity team that is playing a mixture of varsity and jayvee teams. The hope and expectation is that the eight players on the jayvee squad will advance to the varsity level next year.

Natalie Soto is serving as the coach this season. A former high school player in California, Soto took over the program very late, choosing to coach the team when no one else would. She has a daughter, **Lydia Soto**, who plays on the team as an eighth-grader.

The measuring stick for success is not focused on wins and losses this season but more so on growth and development.

“Fundamentals and learning the game. That has been our focus,” said Soto. “We have eight girls and five are eighth-graders with three sophomores. It’s a fun group to coach because they work very hard and have a great attitude. We have come a long way this season in terms of our fundamentals and knowledge

of the game. I’m really impressed with how much we have improved. I took the team because they didn’t have a coach but I have enjoyed this season more than I thought I would.”

The three sophomores on the team this season are **Marlie Needham**, **Lilly Gant** and **Sophia Arzillo**. The remaining roster of eighth-graders include **McKayla Cormack**, **Lilly Heath**, **Sydney Harriott**, and **Paola Estrada**.

“We measure success with small victories and steady improvement,” Soto said. “I want to see improvement every day, every game. Just do things a little better each time out. We don’t have much height so we have to play scrappy and create chaos with pressure. This group has embraced that. It’s been cool to watch us grow this season.

“We are competing well, more than the record shows. We have some games where we are just over-matched but we compete in most every game. We’re a totally different team than we were when we started and I think we will be a team that is improved from year to year. We will be ready to play a full varsity schedule next season.”



Beaufort girls basketball off to hot start this year

By David Shelton
Senior Writer
Beaufort – With the non-region schedule completed, the focus for basketball teams in the state turn to region play in January.

Playoff berths and seedings are determined by region finish, making region play the most important part of the regular season.

To that end, the **Beaufort** girls basketball team is off to a great start, posting wins in their first two region 7-AAAA contests and winning 11 of their first 15 games overall this season. The team is on track to bettermg last year’s win total of 16 while contending for the region title.

Among the top performers early on this season are junior **Amiyah Brown**, sophomore **Jania Hayward**, freshman **Da’Leah LaBoard**, and freshman **Zaria Coaxum**. Hayward is leading the team in scoring, averaging 19.4 points per game. She also averages nearly five rebounds and three assists per contest. Brown adds 13.7 points per game, adding 3.7 boards, while Coaxum is scoring 7.9 points per game. LaBoard is adding just over five points per game.

Coming off a 1-19 season of a year ago, the boys basketball team is looking to improve but has found it to be a tough road. The Eagles managed just one win in their first 11 contests, including an 0-2 start to region play. But coach **Jeremy Huff** is optimistic about his team showing marked improvement in the 2025-26 season.

“The sky is the limit for these young guys,” 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 averaging 4.1 points per game.

Junior guard **Kobe Hernandez** averages 4.0 points per game and junior guard **Willis Watson** is averaging 7.4 points and 4.6 rebounds per game. Junior **Qualeek Isnar** is the starting center and averages 7.3 points per game. Freshman Keaton Layman averages 5.2 points per game. season. Sophomore forward **PJ Davis** rounds out the starting lineup.

The wrestling season also is heavy into region competition and Beaufort has several grapplers ranked among the best in AAAA in their weight class.

Colton Freeman is the second-ranked wrestler in the 215-pound weight class and **Santino Com-**
See Beaufort, pg, 69



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Good Luck, Eagles!

Third-ranked Stratford wrestling eyes big finish

By Rob Gantt
Special to The HSSR
Goose Creek - The **Stratford High School** wrestling team is in position to claim back-to-back Region 7-5A crowns this winter.

The Knights, ranked third in Class 5A Div. I by SCMAT, improved to 15-3 overall and 3-0 against region foes Jan. 15 with a resounding victory over visiting Cane Bay on the Knights’ senior night. Stratford can wrap up the region title with a duals win at Wando Wednesday, Jan. 21.

Stratford stayed unbeaten in the region with a 64-15 victory against Cane Bay and honored its eight seniors.

“It’s always nice to win when you’re recognizing your seniors who have been in the program and done what our seniors have done in the practice room,” Stratford wrestling coach **David Maningding** said. “Some of them have not been starters their whole high school careers, but they work as hard as everyone else and that’s a testament to our team as a whole. They’re helping the other starters get better. That’s all you can ask for. I’m grateful to have them.”

Stratford has already knocked off Berkeley (57-19) and Lucy Beckham (43-25) in region competition. The win over Berkeley was the 100th career victory at the Crowfield Boulevard school for Maningding.

Versus Cane Bay, the Knights fell behind 9-0 after two bouts, but claimed 11 of the next 12 weight classes to pull away from the Cobras.

Winners for Stratford were **Kensen Sims** (120, pinfall), **Travis Grey** (126, pinfall), **Jacob Lutz** (132, pinfall), **Jacob Javier** (138, tech fall), **Dae-vion Mitchell** (144, pinfall), **Jonah Coleman** (150, forf.), **Drayton Howard** (165, pinfall), **Tanner Merta** (175, tech fall), **Ashton Pavlovich** (190, forf.), **Fred Brown** (215, pinfall) and **Chris Grigg**

Lady Gators cruising on hardwood this winter

By Rob Gantt
Special to The HSSR
Goose Creek - **Goose Creek High School’s** girls basketball team has reeled off eight straight victories on the hardwood, including a notable performance against the defending Class 5A Div. II state champions.

The Lady Gators squandered all of a 15-point lead in the first half against Region 7-5A rival Berkeley High School Jan. 13, but steadied themselves down the stretch to slip past the visiting Lady Stags, 57-52.

Coach **Jabari Deas’** team then cruised past Lucy Beckham, 69-32, Jan. 16, to move to 16-1 overall and 3-0 in the region.

The Berkeley win stood out to Deas because it felt like a big-time postseason game. The crowd was engaged all night and the environment was electric. The Lady Stags rallied to take the lead in the fourth quarter at one point.

“Let’s tell it like it is, (Berkeley) is the defending state champion,” Deas said. “They play with the heart of a champion, so I knew they would come after us. Coach (Crystal Peace) made her adjustments, and they had a heck of a third quarter. We were able to make some stops and refocus the girls. We made enough plays down the stretch. There was some good, quality basketball played by both teams.”

Senior guard **Aiyanna Moses**, who transferred back to Goose Creek from Berkeley, hit six free throws in the final 32 seconds to secure the victory for the Lady Gators.

“She really works on her free throws,” Deas said.



Wrestler Fred Brown

(HW, forf.).
Goose Creek caps the regular season against crosstown rival Goose Creek High Jan. 28 before playoffs open Jan. 31.

Dacosta cruises in Collins Rose Classic

Stratford High School’s **Isabel Dacosta** dominated all four opponents she encountered during the Collins Rose Classic at Stall High School Jan. 17 to win the 135-pound weight class for the Knights in the largest girls-only tournament in the state.
Dacosta won four matches via pinfall to finish first. She was the lone Berkeley County School District student-athlete to claim a weight class.



Freshman Guard Madeline Dates

“She always puts the extra time in. As a senior point guard, that’s what I want. I want the ball in my hands. She responded. She was clutch from the line.”

Freshman guard **Madeline Dates** led the Lady Gators in scoring, finishing with 18 points. Like Moses, Dates also tallied eight points over the final eight minutes. Sophomore guard **Celeste Griffin** made three 3-pointers in the first half and scored all

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of her 13 points over the first two quarters.
On the season, Dates powers the Lady Gators on the scoreboard. She averages a team-high 20.4 points and team-best 5.3 boards per game. Griffin chips in nine points per game and makes a team-best 3.5 steals per contest. Moses is the third leading scorer at 7.7 points per game and chips in more than two steals and two assists a game.

Freshman guard **Aubrey Downey** (7.3 ppg), senior forward **Natalia Madison-Ladson** (4.5 ppg, 4.3 rpg) and junior guard **Jalayia Jacobs** (4.4 ppg, 2.6 apg) are more consistent contributors for Goose Creek.

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Jefferson Davis boys get first victory of season

By Dennis Brunson
hssr.com Associate Editor
Blackville – The Jefferson Davis Academy boys basketball team didn’t get to play a lot of basketball in the early going of the season. The Raiders only got to play three games before the new year and didn’t play Game 7 until January 15. The first six games ended in defeat before Jefferson Davis finally chalked up a win by traveling to Martinez, Georgia, and picking up a 51-46 victory over Community Christian.

“We got a late start because of football and then we had a couple of games postponed due to sickness,” said Raiders head coach Anthony Reitenour. “We still had people recovering from football injuries, and we’re having to get into basketball shape. “We’re working and I think we’re getting to where we need to be. We haven’t played a lot of games, but we’re going to play three and four games a week for the rest of the season.”

With the graduation of Nasir Void, Colson Loadholt and Payton Payne, Jefferson Davis lost over 35 points and 28 rebounds a contest. Reitenour is still trying to find the right combination to fill that void. He has a 13-player roster, but injuries have limited availability at times.

“We had one game where we had six players suit up,” Reitenour said. In the early going of the season, sophomore Will Stillinger and junior Corbin Perry were the leading scorers at 9.0 points per game. Senior Nolan Craig was averaging 8.0.

Other members of the team are seniors Landon Williams and Tanner Page, juniors Davidson Owens, Judson Bowers, Stanse Youngblood, Harrison Ray and Connor Sandifer and sophomores Jake Harrington and Leighton Lihan.

JDA GIRLS OPEN 4-2

Like the boys, the Jefferson Davis girls basketball team has seen limited game time. The Raiders were 4-2 through January 15. All things considered,

Fox Creek girls making progress this winter

By Dennis Brunson
hssr.com Associate Editor
North Augusta – Head coach Aaron Ray doesn’t believe his Fox Creek High School girls basketball team has played close to its capabilities yet this season. That, however, doesn’t mean the Predators aren’t making progress.

“We haven’t played to what I expected yet, but we are coming along well,” said Ray, whose team won 10 of its first 16 games and begins Region 4-AAA play on January 16. “The girls are buying in and working hard every day.

The reason I feel we haven’t played to our best yet is that it’s still early and we are learning how to be leaders and finish games. But overall, they are learning and getting better.”

FCHS returns four starters in juniors Jada Jennings and Maya Kryshstalowych and sophomores Mia Price and Mariah Price from last year’s 9-14 team. The newcomer to the lineup – and to the program – is senior Avery Schwarz. She and Jennings share the team lead in scoring at 9.6 points per game. Schwarz is averaging 6.2 rebounds, while Jennings is grabbing 4.7 boards.

Kryshstalowych is the leading rebounder at 8.9 to go with 5.8 points. Mariah Price is averaging 3.7 points, and Mia Price is averaging 3.1.

head coach Larry Johnson feels pretty good about the circumstances. “We are developing really well at this time to say we’ve only played (six) games and most teams are up to nine and 10 games,” Johnson said. “As of right now, we are where I expected us to be, but we have a lot of room for improvement.

“I look at it both ways,” Johnson said of the lack of early games. “It can be a good thing because teams can’t really gauge our potential based off of (six) games. And it can be a bad thing because my team doesn’t have the in-game experience going into region play.”

Jefferson Davis is led by the inside presence of sophomore post player Rileigh York. She was averaging a double-double of 17.0 points and 13.0 rebounds, both team highs, along with a team high 2.4 blocked shots.

Senior Rynn Fickling was also averaging in double figures in scoring at 11.0. She led the team in assists at 2.6.

Senior Abby Deering was averaging 7.8 points and 8.8 rebounds, sophomore Riley Williams was averaging 5.8 points and 5.8 rebounds, and junior Esmeralda Montejano was averaging 3.8 points. Johnson said Montejano is the player he turns to when he needs the defensive clamps to be put on an opposing player.

Other members of the team are juniors Kaylee Crouch and Brooke Fogle, freshman Kelsey Croft and eighth-grader Raelyn Youngblood.

With eight games remaining in the regular season, Johnson is looking for the Raiders to take a big step forward.

“I need to see a little bit more aggressiveness from my team as we come down the final stretch of the season, and that would really open things up for us in the tournament,” he said.

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Everyone on the 10-player roster has played in at least 11 games. Other members of the team are seniors Alivia Barnwell and Olivia Winiecki, juniors Jayla Norris and Kennedy Wesby and sophomore Marcie Hyer.

“The key to this team being successful is the want to,” Ray said. “Everybody on the team has to want to get better. They have to want to win and expect to win and giving full-out 100 percent effort every day they step on the court.

“The things we have to improve on as we prepare for the state tournament is consistency, doing all the little things right.”

FOX CREEK BOYS START 11-4

The Fox Creek boys basketball team won 11 of its first 15 points and is putting the ball in the basket at a fast rate. The Predators were averaging 75.3 points with four players averaging in double figures.

Leading the way is senior Chanze Allen at 14.4 to go with a tam high 6.8 rebounds. Juniors Kobe Sims and Justin Vining, both South Carolina Basketball Coaches Association AAA All-State picks last year, are averaging 13.2 and 12.4 points, respectively. Vining leads in assists at 4.6.

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Senior Jason Rogers is averaging 10.1 points, and junior Randy Robinson is averaging 7.7 point and 6.0 rebounds.

Senior Keori Atwell is at 5.8 points n junior Gavin Baskett is at 5.4.

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junior Austin Varn, sophomore Carter Beeks and freshman Colson Williams.

Other members of the team are sophomore Boone Gruber, sophomore Graham Varnadoc, senior Bradley Sievert, junior Lathan Hartzog, sophomore Warren Judy, sophomore Clayton Ziegler and junior Will Quattlebaum.

Dorchester is joined in Region 2 by Faith Christian, Charleston Collegiate and Cathedral Academy.

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Salutes
the Eagles!

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.

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

See Palmetto Christian, pg, 68



2025-26 Dorchester Academy Raiders girls basketball

Dorchester girls open up ‘25-26 with 15-2 record

By Dennis Brunson
hssr.com Associate Edior
St. George – The Dorchester Academy girls basketball team has four returning starters from a team that went 16-8 a year ago and came within a basket of playing for the SCISA AA state championship.

So it is no surprise the Raiders are having a successful 2025-26 campaign. They won 15 of their first 17 games and started 3-0 in Region 2.

The four returning starters are junior Palmer Kizer, junior Alyssa Grooms, junior Rylee Weathers and sophomore Emery McClure. The newcomer to the starting five is a senior in Rylee Matthews.

The first two players off the bench for Dorchester are senior Lyla Owens and freshman Madison Downey.

Other members of the team are sophomore Emma Branch and sophomore Brinley Pope, both first-year varsity players.

McClure leads the team as she is averaging a double-double with over 10 points and 10 rebounds per game, respectively. She’s also averaging four steals a contest.

The Raiders have a balanced scoring attack as Weathers and Grooms are both averaging double

figures. Matthews is averaging double figures in rebounds.

Kizer, who is averaging four steals a contest, is the defensive catalyst, according to veteran head coach Callie McClure.

“Kizer is at the top of our defense, setting the tone on that side of play,” said Coach McClure, who saw the Raiders drop a 44-43 decision to Laurens Academy in the semifinals. “She is feisty and quick and never runs out of gas.”

DORCHESTER BOYS OPEN 9-8

The Dorchester boys basketball team won nine of its first 17 games and was 1-1 in region play. With four games still left to go in the region, Raiders head coach Nick Mcalhany thinks the best is yet to come for his team.

“We still have not played our best ball yet,” Mcalhany said. “We’re looking forward to doing that as we get into region play.”

Dorchester went 10-13 last season. They lost to Carolina Academy 62-53 in the first round of the AA state tournament.

Senior Abe Shuler is the leader of the offense, averaging around 15 points a contest. Joining Shuler in the starting lineup are senior John Quattlebaum,

PCA Eagles looking to build on recent success

By Neill Kirkpatrick
Staff Writer
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)

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Berry stressing strong finish for Woodland boys

By Billy G. Baker
Publisher

Dorchester-Henry Berry got the head boys basketball job at **Woodland High** in late summer so he felt like his team would experience a learning curve during the 2025-26 season as he installed his basketball system.

“Getting the job late in the summer didn’t allow any time for me to work-out with the team during the open gym period in the summer,” said Coach Berry, who spent the past 20 seasons as a coach in Loganville, Ga prior to coming to Woodland. “We are still jelling as a team late into this season, but our players are working hard and focused on steady growth.

“We have been playing much better of late,” said Coach Berry. “The players are started to better understand the vision and the goals I have for the program.”

On offense, Coach Berry said he teaches his players to constantly pass the pass with the goal of seeking mismatches for high percentage baskets. On defense his teams play both man-to-man or zone depending on the opponent, and he says his teams also press a lot.

Coming into mid-January, the Wolverines are 5-11, 1-1 as they begin the stretch portion of the 2025-26 season with a strong goal of finishing strong and earning a spot in the upcoming AA basketball playoffs.

To date the top scorer on the team is 6-3 junior forward **Jervaze Salley** who is averaging 14 points and seven rebounds a game. “Jervaze is a great scorer and good rebounder, and he makes players around him better,” said Coach Berry.

The quickest Wolverine on the court is junior point guard **Juan Forero** who is averaging 8 points, and he leads the team with five assists per game.

Coach Berry is very high on 6-3 freshman small forward **Jhailen Herrin** and he has even made him

Woodland girls basketball focused on pushing toward a strong finish

From Staff Reports

Dorchester—The Woodland girls’ basketball team improved their record to (9-6, 1-1) with a 39-36 win over Andrews on January, 13.

Against the Yellow Jackets, freshman forward **Lenaya Ross** and junior center **Sh’mya James** each scored 9 points to fuel the victory. Junior guard **Jalina Goodwin** contributed 8 points also.

Other Lady Wolverines contributing points against Andrews included, senior guard **Carmen Allen** (7), junior guard **Emma Smalls** (2), junior guard **Chanelle Simmons** (2), along with junior forward **Jakyhia Martino** (2).

To date the Woodland girls have claimed other wins this season over **Branchville** (63-3), **Cane Bay** (42-27), **Lake Marion** (54-37), **Cross** (54-22), **Bethune-Bowman** (36-35), **Stall** (54-43), **Cane Bay** (36-31), **Branchville** (45-4) and **Andrews**.

Four players lead the team in scoring with just over 8 points each per game. Goodwin is at 8.8 points, 2.6 steals and 2.2 assists a game. Ross is av-



Senior Jervaze Salley

the captain of the team. “He is a very good leader with a high basketball I-Q, and he plays year-round AAU basketball, and he is very dedicated to the game,” said Coach Berry. “He is a very solid rebounder, and he is averaging 8.5 points a game.”

Jamin Brown starts as a 5-11 senior shooting guard, and he leads the team in steals at four per game.

The remaining two starters share time in the persons of 6-0 sophomore guard **Kymonte Goodwin** who brings extra shooting skill to the court or 6-8 junior center **Daniel Balzan** who is an effective shot

eraging 8.6 points a game and 8.5 rebounds along with a team leading 2.6 blocks a game.

Allen is at 8.1 points including 2.2 steals and 1.3 assists an outing. Eighth grade guard Essence **Walker** is at 8.1 points and 3,8 rebounds a game. Junior center **Sh’mya James** is at 4.4 points and 4.9 rebounds a game.

The Woodland girls have 8 games left in the regular season. They host **Academic Magnet** on January, 20 before an away game at Timberland on the 23rd. They host **Phillip Simmons** on the 27th and close out the month of January with an away game at Andrews on the 30th.

There are four games in February starting with an away game at Burke on the 3rd and then an away game at Academic Magnet on the 6th. The Wolverines host Timberland on the 10th and close out the regular season at Burke on February, 10.

Coach Jefferies is assisted by **Todd Martin**.

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blocker averaging two per game, while being a good defender in the paint.

The reaming four key reserves on the team are 6-1 senior wing **Jaylen Sampson**, 6-0 junior wing **Lakye’ White**, 6-5 junior center/forward **Samual Gadson**, along with 6-0 junior wing **Elijah DeLee**.

“I feel like the strength of the team is that our kids play hard and they all try to be good teammates,” said Coach Berry. “They also all have good on court communication with each other.

“Our goal right now is to play hard, finish the regular season strong so we can earn a spot in the playoffs,” said Coach Berry. “Some of our keys to success is to rebound well and protect the paint.”

The Wolverines’ five wins to date have come over **Lake Marion** (twice), **Cross**, **Branchville**, and **Andrews**.

Between January 20 and the end of the regular season on February 12 the playoff fate of the team will be determined by how well they play in these 8 region games. They host **Academic Magnet** on the 20th, travel to **Timberland** on the 23rd and host **Philip Simmons** on the 27th before closing out the month on the road at **Andrews** on the 30th.

Tarting on February 3, the team is at **Burke before travelling g to Academic Magnet on the 6th. The Wolverines host Timberland on the 10th and close out the regular season at Burke on February 12.**



Woodland Girls Basketball coach Austin Jefferies shows off the 2023-24 Region Championship and his Region 7-AA Coach of the Year trophies



Lady Warriors hoops competing through injuries

By Billy G. Baker
Publisher

Ehrhardt—**Andrew Jackson Academy** (3-13, 0-1) varsity girls’ basketball coach **Zach Boltin** points out that the Lady Warriors have played only one game this season completely healthy but with the team back at full strength he is hoping for a strong finish with seven games remaining in the regular season.

“We only have just three teams in our region and we took the **Cross Schools** into over-time (loss 44-36) at home on January 9 when we finally got our complete team on the court at the same time,” said Coach Boltin. “We have an uphill battle to win the region because when we go to the Cross Schools on January 27, we will need to beat them by more than 8 points.

“They also beat the other team in our region (**Holy Trinity**) by 52 points, and I do not see us beating them by 53 points when we play them and that is also factored into the tie breaker also,” said Coach Boltin. “Regardless, we are looking forward to the upcoming playoffs now that we are healthy.”

Coming into games in mid-January the team’s top scorers are junior SG **Kinslee Carson** (10.4 pts & 4.7 rebounds) along with junior guard **Bella Carrigg** (9 pts & 2.1 rebounds & 2.5 steals) a game.

Junior Forward (5-11) **McKinnley Beard** is usually near the top of the scoring index, but she has missed numerous games this season with injuries. Beard is currently averaging 7/1 points and she leads the team with 7.7 rebounds a game.

“When McKinnley was out Carson stepped up and took up the scoring slack for us,” said Coach Boltin. “She has really stepped up her game this sea-

Warriors boys hoops focused on strong finish

By Billy G. Baker
Publisher

Ehrhardt—The **Andrew Jackson Academy** boys’ basketball team (5-15, 0-3) have only been able to compete about 35 per cent of the time this season at full strength and the Warriors are finally back at 100 per cent entering the final seven games of the 2025- 26 season.

Veteran head coach **Josh Barnes** is known for doing his best coaching near playoff time and he says this about his teams near future. “I feel like now that we will be playing with a full deck of cards I feel like we will step up our defensive play and play more man-to-man defense and press and trap more,” said Coach Barnes. “With a limited roster earlier this season we avoided foul trouble by playing a lot of zone defenses.

“As of Tuesday (January 20) when we play **Jefferson Davis**, we will finally be 100 per cent healthy,” said Coach Barnes. “We do have playmakers on this team, and I am hoping they step up and play their best basketball of the season for the rest of this season.”

To date, junior point guard **Ollie Barnes** (6-0,170) is leading the scoring index with 22.7 points and 6.1 rebounds a game, including 2.2 assists and 1.3 steals a game. “In grades 8, 9, and 10 we had other shooters and Ollie had a role to catch and dis-

son.”

Sophomore PG **Harlo Sease** is having a solid season with 5.8 points and 5.9 rebounds a game. “Harlo does a good job bringing the ball up the court and she plays excellent defense,” said Coach Boltin. Sease leads the team in assists at 1.8 a game.

The remaining starter is first year sophomore center **Abby Ayer** who is averaging 1.4 points and 4.6 rebounds a game. “Abby has grown up a lot this season and she continues to improve with every game she plays,” said Coach Boltin.

The remaining hard-working key reserves include soph guard **Scarlett Mixon**, freshman guard **Kiley O’herion**, freshman guard **Brianna Jacques** who is the sixth man off the bench. Freshman guard **Kaitlyn Johnson** rounds out the 9- member team.

The Lady Warriors have wins over **Faith Christian**, **Patrick Henry**, and **Colleton Prep**.

The team has seven games remaining to close out the regular season. As the **HSSR** was preparing to go to press the team played at Holy Trinity on January 16. They were at Branchville on the 17th and will host Jefferson Davis Academy on the 20th. The Lady Warriors close out the month of January with a key region game at the Cross Schools on the 27th.

In early February, the team has three straight home games starting with Holy Trinty on the 3rd, **Holly Hill Academy** on the 4th, and then the team closes out the regular season against **Dorchester Academy** on the 10th.

“We are a much better team than our record reflects,” said Coach Boltin. “We hope to have a strong finish to the regular season and then make a deep run in the playoffs.”

tribute more.

“In the past year he has become stronger and a much better ball handler and he can find shots from many places on the court,” said Coach Barnes. “He can score by driving to the hole or he can step back and hit the three.”

At (6-3) senior G/F **Hall Sease** has battled through injuries this season. He is the second leading scorer on the team at 14.4 points a game and leads the team with 13.3 rebounds a game. Sease is also contributing 1.4 assists and 1.7 steals a game.

“Hall missing games with an injury set us back a lot because he is a solid on ball defender, rebounds very well, and drives well to the basket along with being an excellent passer,” said Coach Barnes. “Getting him back on the floor has made us a better basketball team.”

When Sease was out, 6-4 junior PF **Elizuh Davis** stpped up his game according to Coach Barnes. “He really became a force on the boards, and he stepped up his scoring on the inside also,” said Coach Barnes. “He is probably our most improved player

See **AJA Boys**, pg, 71

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Both Marion hoops teams start seasons 11-7

By Dennis Brunson
hssr.com Associate Editor
Marion – The **Marion High School** boys basketball team has just two returning starters from last year’s 12-15 team. Not only are the Swamp Foxes in-experienced in the starting lineup, but on the team as a whole. There are only two seniors on the roster.

Marion head coach **DJ Kelly** said that hasn’t de-tered his team in its development.
“This team has never stopped growing since the start of the summer,” said Kelly, whose team won 11 of its first 18 games and started 3-2 in Region 7-AA. “We are learning every day. They are a resilient group of young men who want to leave a legacy of excel-lence.

“We don’t worry about the expectations. We re-spect them but we focus on growth and development. They are doing both of these at a high level, and we will ensure that we never stop growing and develop-ing.”

The two returning starters are senior **Charles White II** and freshman **Jayden Nowlin**. White is by and far the offensive leader with a scoring average of 19.9 points per game. He’s also pulling down 6.5 re-bounds.

Nowlin leads in rebounding with a 9.1 average and shares the lead in steals at 2.7. He is scoring at a 7.0 clip and averaging 2.1 assists.

The other three starters are junior **Joshaun Grant**, sophomore **Ian Gause Jr.** and junior **Kamari Wat-son**. Grant leads in assists at 3.9 and shares the lead in steals to go with 8.7 points and 4.5 rebounds.

The 6-foot-8-inch Gause is a force around the bas-ket. He is averaging 2.1 blocked shots and 7.9 re-bounds and 10.8 points. Watson is averaging 3.5 points.

Other members of the playing rotation are sopho-more **Rodrick Dickerson**, sophomore **Jacaurie Brown**, senior **Willie Cross**, sophomore **Kamarie Reddick** and junior **Dereon Legette**. Dickerson is av-eraging 7.2 points and 3.9 rebounds, while Brown is averaging 4.5 points and 3.4 rebounds.

“We simply have to remain focused, patient and disciplined,” Kelly said. “The goal at hand is to be better than we were yesterday. This means extreme preparation by our staff and going 1-0 every single

Mullins boys off to 5-1 start in region play so far

By Dennis Brunson
hssr.com Associate Editor
Mullins – The overall record for the **Mullins High School** boys basketball team through its first 19 games was 12-7. However, the Auctioneers won five of their first six Region 7-AA games, and head coach **Eric Troy** believes the mediocre overall record is largely responsible for that.

“I feel really good about where we stand right now,” Troy said. “We have been battle-tested over the holidays and had solid performances against pretty good, bigger schools.”

Mullins has faced one AAAAA school, one AAAAA school and six AAA schools. The Auction-eers are 3-5 in those games with all five losses com-ing by 11 points or less.

Mullins is led by the junior 1-2 punch of **Deyon Ford** and **Dakarai Worley**. A 6-foot wing, Worley is averaging an impressive double-double of 18.6 points per game with a team high rebounding aver-age of 14.6. He also leads in steals at 3.6 and was averaging 3.5 assists.

Ford leads in both scoring and rebounding with averages of 20.2 and 4.0, respectively. He was also averaging 4.4 rebounds and 3.0 steals.

KJ Ford was averaging 8.2 points, 2.5 steals and 2.1 assists. Senior **Amir Lee** was averaging 6.4 points and 5.8 rebounds, senior **Andre Littlejohn** was averaging 5.4 points and 4.5 rebounds, and sen-ior **Braden Hughes** was averaging 3.9 points and 3.2 rebounds.

Troy, who has led the Auctioneers to a 55-20

day. When we make up in our mind that we will be mentally mature, our team goals will remain in reach.”

MARION GIRLS ALSO START 11-7

Like the boys, the Marion girls basketball team won 11 of its first 18 games. However, the ladies won only two of their five region contests.

First-year head coach **Justice Gee** likes the way her team has performed, but she knows improvement is necessary.

“I feel encouraged by the direction we’re heading, but I’m also very clear-eyed about where we still need to grow,” Gee said. “The way we train, prepare, and compete is much closer to the standards we set at the start. Our understanding of roles has improved, indi-vidual confidence is stronger across the group, and the team is starting to trust the process rather than chasing short-term results.

“That said, the process isn’t linear. There are mo-ments when execution drops, especially under pres-sure, which tells us we’re still learning how to sustain our level for longer stretches, working on stronger communication and not dwelling on mistakes for too long. The encouraging part is that those issues are cor-rectable, and the players are receptive to feedback and accountability.”

Senior **Maliyah Williams** was the leading scorer at 10.4. Senior **Shamya McKelvey** was averaging 9.2 and sophomore **Ashanti Gause** 8.8. Senior **Sheteira Bethae** was the leading rebounder at 7.3 to go with a 6.8 scoring average.

BRIAN HENNECY NO LONGER FOOTBALL COACH

Brian Hennecy is no longer the football head coach after five seasons.

The Swamp Foxes have struggled mightily the past two seasons. They were winless this past season with a 0-10 record after going 1-9 in 2024.

Hennecy’s first three seasons were vastly different though. Marion went 8-1 in Hennecy’s first season in 2021, 8-3 in 2022 and 10-2 in 2023.

Hennecy had a 27-25 record.

GIRLS BASKETBALL STARTS 2-9

The Mullins girls basketball team is in its first season under the guidance of head coach **Alex White**. The season hasn’t come close to starting the way White had hoped for as the Auctioneers won only two of their first 11 games and started 1-5 in Region 7.

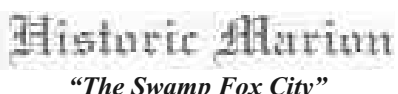

White said he had no real anticipation one way or the other on what the season might hold.

“I didn’t have any expectations coming into the season,” White said. “This is my first year here at Mullins. At this point we’re just changing the cul-ture, getting better fundamentally and learning to compete at a high level consistently.”

Consistency has been the biggest issue for Mullins to date. It lost to defending region cham-pion and lower state runner-up **Lake City** by four points and has been competitive in several other games. Then there have been some blowouts along the way.

The Auctioneers have three returning starters from last season’s 7-9 team that reached the state playoffs. Two of them are sophomore guards **NaRiyah Woodberry** and **Breanna Ford**. Wood-

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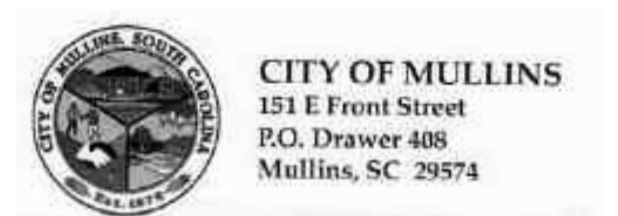
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See Mullins, pg. 68

Colleton County hoopsters enter region play

By David Shelton
Senior Writer
Walterboro – With the non-region slate com-plete, the **Colleton County** basketball teams are in the thick of region 7-AAAA play, both look-ing to earn automatic berths to the AAAAA state playoffs in February.

Both teams have been competitive in the early region contests. Last season was a struggle for both teams in region play. The girls team fin-ished 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.

The boys team has opened this season with a 7-10 overall record and a 1-2 start in region play. The Cougars have a region win over Beau-fort with losses to Bluffton and Hilton Head en-tering their Jan. 20 game against Bishop England. The roster is pretty much evenly split between seniors and underclassmen but only a handful of players contributed last season.

Through 17 games, the top scorer is senior **Jaqueas Martin**, who averages 9.1 points per game. Junior **Michael Witkin** averages 7.5 points per game. Junior **Galil Frazier** is scoring 8.3 points while grabbing 5.1 rebounds per game and junior **Anthony Hamilton** averages 6.1 points per game. Freshman **Jair Doctor** and **Reginald Manigo** are scoring about four points per game. Senior **Kaidyn Ballard-Frazier** is adding 5.4 points per game. Galil Frazier has been the top rebounder thus far.

Remaining seniors on the team include **Christopher Platts** and **Ronald Youmans**. Fill-ing out the roster are freshmen **Jamal Garrett** and **Jordan Linnen**.

The girls team, coached by **Charles Lindsey**,

Colleton Prep hoops looking to finish strong

BY David Shelton
Senior Writer
Walterboro – It has been more than a decade since the **Colleton Prep** boys basketball program has produced a winning record but that could change this season.

Colleton Prep’s last winning season came during 2009-10 season. Wins have been hard to come by since. Until now. The Warhawks are on pace to pro-duce a winning record this season, picking up 12 wins in their first 16 outings. The win total doubles last year’s win total of six. Colleton Prep had just 13 total victories in the four seasons prior to this season.

Coach **John Caldwell** is still laying a solid foun-dation for the program in his second season but the Warhawks are no longer a pushover for opponents.

Senior **Mateo Castillo** leads the way this season, averaging 19.4 points and 3.5 assists. Senior **Colin Hiers** adds 14.9 points, 6.8 blocks and 2.8 steals per game while junior **Charlie Walker** averages 8.3 points and 5.7 rebounds per contest.

Junior **Perry Corbett** adds 8.2 points and junior **Cale Owens** averages 4.2 points, 4.5 steals and 4.7 assists per game.

Two other seniors on the team are **Grayson Mar-tin** and **Steven Crosby**. Other juniors are **Caleb Bar-sha** and **Tylor Reisnor**. The remaining sophomores are **Alex Fargnoli**, **Tre’veon Ferguson**, **Ben Cain** and **Nick Martin**. Rounding out the roster is fresh-



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has already doubled last season’s win total post-ing 12-7 overall record and 2-1 in region play heading into the Jan. 20 game against Bishop England. Several underclassmen are contribut-ing early on as the team has only three seniors on the roster.

Junior **Keyerah Koger** leads the team in scoring at 11.8 points per game. She also aver-ages 4.3 rebounds per game. One of three sen-iors, **Xiomara Oxney**, averages 10.2 points and 4.9 rebounds per game. Another senior, **Trinity Drayton**, is scoring 5.0 points and grabbing 7.5 rebounds per game.

Sophomore **Tierra Watkins** averages 7.7 points and 8.0 rebounds. Eighth-grader **Khy Doctor** averages six points per game and eighth-grader Lillian Mitchell is scoring 4.5 points per contest.

The other juniors on the roster are **Lalia Yates**, **Destiny McMillian**, and **Jah’Nyiah White**. The sophomores are **Kashanti Glover**, **Shaneyshia Kelly**, **Kemori Williams**.

The remaining region schedule for both teams consists of May River (Jan. 27), Beaufort (Jan. 30), Bluffton (Feb. 3), Hilton Head (Feb. 6) and Bishop England (Feb. 10).

The wrestling season also is underway. Col-leton 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.

man **Preston Zeigler**.

The Warhawks have three wins over Holly Hill Academy, two wins over Orangeburg Prep, two wins over Thomas Sumter, two wins over Andrew Jackson Academy, and single wins over Cardinal Newman. St. John’s Christian, Dorchester Academy

The remaining schedule has two games against Faith Christian, two games against Hilton Head Prep, and single games against Dorchester Academy, St. John’s Christian and two games against Patrick Henry.

The girls team, coached by **Belinda McCoy**, is in rebuild mode with a young roster. The team won 17 games last year but lost considerable production to graduation. As of January 16, this year’s team was sitting at 5-8 overall.

The lone senior on the team this winter is **Ava Murray**. Two juniors are **Millie Drew** and **Cecelia Williams**. **Bre Cain** and **Ann Howell** are sopho-mores, with eighth-graders **Cooper White** and **Brooklyn Whitley** rounding out the roster.

The girls team recorded wins so far against An-drew Jackson Academy (twice), Holly Hill Academy (twice) and Thomas Sumter Academy.

Remaining games on the schedule include two games each against Patrick Henry, Faith Christian and Hilton Head Prep and single games against St. John’s Christian and Dorchester Academy.



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Gray boys hoops dominate Keenan at MLK Bash

By WORTHY EVANS
Special to the HSSR
Columbia - The **Gray Collegiate** boys basket-ball team took a day off from powering through Region 4-4A opponents. On Saturday at the **MLK Bash** at **C.A. Johnson High School**, the War Eagles (14-2, 6-0) whipped former conference rival and defending 3A state champion **Keenan** 80-64.

Luis Echevarria drained a 3-pointer to open the scoring and Gray Collegiate poured on the 3s and transition baskets throughout the game. Gray closed out the first quarter up 23-10, went into halftime with a 44-29 lead, and had a 20-point margin at times in the third quarter, which ended with a 64-48 lead.

“I told them any time you play a Keenan team, they’re going to play hard, they’re going to be physical, and they’re going to bring the best out of you,” head coach **Dion Bethea** said. “Our guys have seen everything, but this was a test for us. I’m glad that everybody stepped up and responded.”

Echevarria finished with 20 points to win player-of-the-game honors in the final game on the Bash schedule. **Kennesaw State** signee **Levi Ball** had 19 points and **Ricky Littlejohn** had 13 points.

Gray sank nine 3s in the game, which enabled the War Eagles to stretch their lead throughout. Bethea, who spent last year at **Georgia Southern** as an assistant coach, credits his time there when it comes to the War Eagles’ shooting percentage.

“They taught me a lot. We do a lot of PK

shooting at practice, focusing on making shots, not just taking shots,” he said. “These guys are tremendous at making shots. When they do miss one, I don’t know if y’all noticed, they’ll run up to each other and say hey, you’ll make the next one. It’s all about making shots if you miss them.”

Gray had a strong defensive showing as well, holding Keenan to 10 points in the first quarter, including **Malik Branson’s** 3-pointer at the buzzer. That first-quarter effort made the difference, as the **Raiders** (15-5, 2-0) kept pace with the War Eagles from there on out. Gray won the second quarter 21-19, the third quarter 20-10, and the teams finished the fourth quarter 16-16.

“We made sure the rotations were right,” Bethea said. “We’ve got to do it together defensively and we did a great job of rotation and getting in the right spots to recover from a missed assignment.”

Back in 2024, before Keenan moved up to Class 3A and before Gray moved up to Class 4A, the two teams were Region 4-2A rivals. Gray leads the rivalry 14-3 with Saturday’s win. This was the first time the teams squared off since the playoffs in 2024.

Keenan head coach **Zach Norris** was in attendance but not on the Raiders’ bench because of a 13-game suspension because of a High School League violation that occurred last summer.

“The best part for me was at the beginning of the game, giving Coach Norris a hug, Bethea said. “That See **Gray Collegiate**, pg. 69



2025-26 Oceanside Girls basketball

Oceanside girls looking to take the next step

By David Shelton
Senior Writer
Mt. Pleasant – The **Oceanside Collegiate** girls basketball program has progressed each year under coach **Mandy Harrison**. Now in her eighth season, the program looks to take the next step in their progression.

The Landsharks reached the Lower State championship game last season before losing to Dillon on a shot at the buzzer, just missing out on an opportunity to play for a state title. The team ended last year with 22 wins and has won 71 games over the last four seasons.

This season, the Landsharks are off to an 11-3 start and are ranked No. 1 in Class AAA. Expectations are high as the season hits the home stretch.

“Yes, we feel like we certainly have the potential to get to the championship game,” Harrison said. “We have some tough competition for sure. Dillon is very good again and there are others that will be tough opponents. But we have the experience, the talent, and the chemistry to advance. Long way to go but the potential is definitely there for us.”

The Landsharks are led by three veteran seniors who bring loads of experience and leadership to the table. Guard **Ella Hunter** leads the team in scoring

at 13 points per game. Wing/forwards and twin sisters **Josie** and **Henley Hanks** are in their fourth year with the varsity and each averages about 10 points per game.

“Their leadership has helped us gel,” Harrison said. “They bought into the culture and the others have followed. We rely a lot on them.”

A fourth senior starter is **Scarlett Mayer**, a standout lacrosse player who transferred from Porter-Gaud. The fifth starter is junior **Reagan Black**, a transfer from Lucy Beckham.

First off the bench is sophomore standout **Dora Jones**, a transfer from First Baptist and a tenacious defender. Junior **Zione Wilson** also sees considerable playing time off the bench.

“We have good depth and we play a lot of girls,” Harrison said. “We don’t drop off with our substitutes. Everyone has a role to play.”

Rounding out the roster this season are sophomores **Sylvie Davinroy** and **Louise Moore**, senior **Sadie Rice**, and freshmen **Andrea Harnig** and **Sulivan Harrison**.

“We try to set the tone with our defense,” the coach said. “We pressure the ball and play man the entire floor. We’re pretty athletic and we run the floor. We don’t really have a true post presence but

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we have some shooters and good speed. It all starts with defense though.”

Harrison says the biggest threat in the region is Orangeburg-Wilkinson, a team with a lot of experience and athleticism. She feels her team is ready for the pressure games that are coming up over the last month of the season.

“Getting as far as we did last year, I think that experience will help,” Harrison said. “We just need to stay focused and take it one game at a time. This group has worked hard and they are ready to earn another shot.”

Pee Dee basketball teams extremely young

By Dennis Brunson
hssr.com Associate Editor

Mullins – Both of the basketball teams for **Pee Dee Academy** had magical seasons in 2024-25. The Golden Eagle girls reached the pinnacle, winning the SCISA AAA state championship to give the program its first state title since 2008.

The PDA boys didn’t quite make it to the summit. They lost to 3-time defending state champion **Hilton Head Prep** in the title game.

Both teams lost massive senior classes, seven for the girls and nine for the boys. Those classes included Region 3 Girls Player of the Year **Rebecca Hammond** and Region 3 Boys Player of the Year **Colby Richardson** as well as two other All-Region selections for the girls and three for the boys.

Needless to say, both teams are having to do some retooling this year. The girls started with a 4-6 overall record and a 1-1 mark in region play while the boys were 3-8 and 0-2.

Both teams are extremely young. The girls have two seniors in **Sydney King** and **Nylee Jane Causey** and two juniors in **Sarah Bethea** and **Carly Carroll**. The sophomores are **Myra Baxley** and **Shelley Lane**, there are two freshmen in **Addison Hasty** and **Dinah Johnson** and one eighth-grader in **Lacy Joye Smith**.

The Pee Dee boys are even younger with no seniors and just two juniors. They are joined by two

sophomores and seven freshmen. That means the Golden Eagles will have the entire roster returning next season.

Both of the juniors, **Miles Wiggins** and **Lucas Rogers** are in the starting lineup. The other three starters are sophomore **Jesse Smith**, sophomore **Avery Robinette** and freshman **Neal Byrd**.

Other members of the playing rotation are freshman **Jack Carmichael**, freshman **Myers Whittington**, freshman **Carter Richardson** and freshman **Chris Stewart**.

The other members of the team are freshman **Rives Tucker** and freshman **Ridge Tucker**.

PDA boys head coach **Kyle Drew** said the goal is to help the team grow as the season progresses.

“We are trying to get better every day with graduating nine seniors from last year’s team and no seniors this year,” Drew said. “We are being process-driven and doing things the right way. If we keep that up the results will come.”

The Pee Dee girls started the season with three straight losses so they have righted the ship a bit. The region victory came by a 44-25 count over **Dillon Christian School**, while the loss came to **Florence Christian School** 45-28.

The boys lost six of their first seven games before winning two in a row. However, that streak was snapped with region losses to DCS and FCS by the respective scores of 68-47 and 67-35.

Andrews basketball fighting for a playoff spot

By Neill Kirkpatrick
Special to the HSSR

Andrews – While the 2024/25 Yellowjackets did not make the playoffs they did end the season on a good note as they snapped a 13-game losing streak by beating Academic Magnet 50-49 in their final game.

Head coach **Lamar Brown** was looking to use that small bit of momentum to build on as the Yellowjackets entered the 2025/26 season with an eye on one of the four playoff berths from region 6AA. Currently, they sit in fourth place in the region at 1-2 with a lot to be determined over the next month.

They have already passed their win total from last year and when you look who they have played and how they have played what you will see is a much-improved basketball team that is competing every night and if they can make some breaks go their way this will be a playoff team.

The Yellowjackets are led by their senior captains in **Kayden Dorsey** and **Chris Stewart**. Dorsey is a solid defender who contributes on both ends of the court. He was the leading receiver for the Yellowjacket receiver this past season.

Stewart, a Western Michigan signee in football, has picked up where he left off last season by picking up his game. He missed the first couple of games because he was elected to play in the Touch-tone North/ South All Star game. Since his return he

leads the Yellowjackets in scoring at 10.4 points per game, rebounding at 9 boards a game and steals per game at two. He was recently named as the region 6AA Defensive Player of the year.

Senior **Jeronde Johnson** is the team’s second leading scorer at 9.3 points per game. He leads the team in assists and is second in steals. He has increased his scoring by six points per game this season. He leads the team in three’s hitting on 41% of his shoots and he hits 77% of his free throws.

Avery Durham is third on the team in scoring at 8.9 points per game and second in rebounding at 5.3 per game. He has also increased his scoring and rebounding from a year ago. The junior is coming off a solid football season where he accounted for over 1200 total yards.

Junior **Jordan McClary** in his first season has made solid contributions on both ends of the court

See **Andrews**, pg. 70

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Gaffney, continued from pg. 20

two points,” said Coach Wright. “We must play smarter and better when both teams come to us in a couple of weeks.

“If we win out the rest of the way, we would Dorman to lose another region game and that would force a tiebreaker and potentially a three-team tie if Byrnes beats Dorman the second time, they play them,” said Coach Wright.

“For us to finish on a run we need to avoid bad stretches, both of those games with Byrnes and Dorman were games of runs by them,” said Coach Wright. “If we can play more consistently, that would put us in a great position.”

Going into the Riverside game the Indians were led in scoring by the solid duo of senior guard/for-

ward Shirah Harris at 16.9 points and 7.3 rebounds a game along with Hopper, a junior guard/forward who was averaging 14.3 points and 8.7 rebounds a game at the time.

Mathis, a junior guard, was third on the team in scoring 9.1 and 3.9 rebounds a game including 2,8 assists and one steal a game.

The other two starters are sophomore guard **Kayin House** at 7.5 points and 3.3 rebounds a game including 1.4 assists and 1.3 steals a game. The 5th starter is sophomore guard/forward Taylor Smith averaging 5.2 points and 2.8 rebounds a game.

Sophomore guard **Kalee Church** and 5-9 freshman guard/forward **Delaney Wilson** have been key players off the bench. Church is averaging 5.2 points

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while Delaney is contributing 3.5 points a game.

Other hard-working members of the team include sophomore forward **Makylee Otey**, junior forward **Naquasha Garrison**, sophomore center **Azoriah Davis**, and sophomore forward **Caydence Easterling**.

Prior to the season, senior guard **Korbyn Lydia**, an excellent on ball defender, was lost for the rest of the school year with a torn ACL. Lydia has signed a softball scholarship to attend **USC Upstate**. She is expected to be cleared to resume athletic activity on June 1.

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

Central boys basketball rounding into form

By Dennis Brunson
hssr.com Associate Editor

Pageland – The **Central High School** boys basketball team got off to a slow start. The Eagles lost their first three games, albeit by a combined 17 points.

However, there’s a little bit more to the story than that.

Central played its first game on Tuesday, December 1. That came just three days after the school’s football team, which included many members of the basketball team, saw its season come to an end playing in the AA playoffs lower state championship game.

The Eagles had the next two games on December 2 and December 4, meaning they got in one practice together before playing the first two contests.

“We got them late, so we were working on getting our chemistry, being able to play together,” said Central head coach **Desmond Sowell**.

It appears the Eagles have made good progress on that front. They have gone 11-2 since with the two losses coming to AAAAA **Nation Ford** by a 56-49 count and 79-76 to AAAAA **Hartsville**. More importantly, they are off to a 3-0 start in Region 4.

All things considered, Sowell likes where his team stands at the moment.

“We’re playing up to my expectations,” he said. “My thing is for us to compete day in and day out. It’s just about us being able to maintain that as we go to region play and try to make a playoff run.”

Central has four starters back from a team that went 18-11 and reached the quarterfinals of the state playoffs. They are seniors **Tazhir Webber**, **Demetrius Myers** and **Aiden Short** and junior **Jordan Crowder**.

Webber leads the team in scoring at 16.9 points per game, assists at 3.9 and steals at 3.3. He is also grabbing 4.6 rebounds.

Crowder is one of three other Eagles scoring in double figures with an 11.9 average while leading in rebounding at 6.4 Myers is just missing out on double figures at 9.7. Short is averaging 3.5 points.

The other two scoring in double figures are senior newcomers **Jakori Holloman** and **Scot Colyer**. Holloman, who transferred from **McBee**, is the sec-

ond leading scorer at 12.6 while averaging 4.5 rebounds, 3.7 assists and 3.1 steals. Colyer, who came from **Florida**, is averaging 11.3 points, 3.6 assists and 2.9 steals.

Giving Central impactful minutes off the bench are junior **Dwayne Louallen Jr.**, junior **Aiden Welch**, senior **Taveon Moore** and senior **Jordan Caldwell**, an offensive lineman on the football team who is 6-feet-4-inches tall and weighs 240 pounds.

“We didn’t have any real size last year,” Sowell said. “Jordan gives us size and toughness.”

While the Eagles can produce points, Sowell likes the way they play defense.

“They’re really athletic and like to defend,” he said. “That helped us to a win against (AAAA) **Darlington**. We’ve shown the ability to compete and play at a high level. There should never be a game that we don’t compete in.”

CENTRAL GIRLS START 1-12

In its first season under head coach **JT McManus**, the Central girls basketball team won only one of first 13 games. However, the one win did come in region play, a 35-34 triumph over **North Central**, giving the Eagles a 1-2 region record.

“We played a tough non-region schedule because we wanted to see where we’re at,” said McManus, who was the junior varsity boys head coach and Sowell’s assistant for five years. “We’re at Square 1, the bare minimum. We’re working on developmental stuff that should have already been done. We’re trying to teach and play games at the same time.”

The starters are seniors **Jariyah Sowell**, **Rielyn Chambers** and **Tashia Quick**, junior **D’lorya Smith** and 6-1 eighth-grader **Brooklyn Segars**.

Sowell, the daughter of the boys head coach, is the leading scorer at 7.9. Quick is averaging 4.7, Segars 3.3, Chambers 3.2 and Smith 1.6.

“We’re working on changing the culture,” McManus said. “The girls are playing hard, but our shot-making ability and ball handling ability aren’t there yet.

Making the playoffs, that’s our goal, our aspiration.”

Myrtle Beach competing well in winter sports

By David Shelton
Senior Writer

Myrtle Beach – The winter sports seasons of basketball and wrestling have reached the midway point and battles for region championships have begun across the state.

Myrtle Beach High’s wrestling and basketball teams are looking to make their run at region 6-AAAAA titles and have competed fairly well thus far.

The wrestling team has competed well with a very tough schedule that included two high level tournaments. The Seahawks finished fourth in the Knights Open at Stratford and placed eighth at the Dreher Blue Devil Invitational against many of the state’s top programs.

Individually, **Liam Maguire** is having a strong season at 113 pounds, winning his weight class at Stratford and finishing second at Dreher. **Farruh Ibrohimjonov** placed second at 120 in the Knights Open and finished fourth at Dreher.

At 138 pounds, **Brendan Maguire** was first at Dreher and second at Stratford. **Umar Kulmatov** won the 144-pound weight class at the Knights Open.

Other wrestlers that are seeing extensive mat time include **Jackson Hudstate** (106), **Tristan Queener** (126), **Anthony Tatro** (132), **Sam**

Colquitt (132), **James Hudstate** (150), **Rene Cano-Ramirez** (157), **Yurem Martinez** (190), **TJ Brown** (285) and **Sachin Sharma** (215).

The boys basketball team has been up and down but looks to gel in the region play. The team had a 6-7 record overall and started region play with a 1-2 record as of Jan. 15.

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. His scoring load is down at 4.7 points per game but he is averaging nearly three steals and three assists. Senior **Jamarcus Carroll** (forward) returns after averaging 8.0 points per game last year and is around 4.5 points this season. Junior **Jomarius Miller** also starts this season at guard and averages 6.3 points per game, while junior forward **Tate Siegmund** is averaging 6.3 points and 3.9 rebounds per contest.

The team’s top scorer through 13 games has been junior **Amare Brown** at 10.3 points per game

Rounding out the roster are juniors **Christian Alston** and **Julian Brown**, and seniors **Traviyon James**, **Kingston French**, **Kai Lester** and **Elijah Williams**.

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Saluda girls off to a strong start this season

By Dennis Brunson
hssr.com Associate Editor

Saluda – The **Saluda High School** girls basketball team has an interesting roster mix. On one hand, the Tigers have three returning starters from a team that went 15-5 and won the Region 2-AA title a year ago. On the other hand, there is only one senior on the roster.

“We are meeting expectations considering we have six new faces on the team,” said head coach **Jeannette Wilder**. “However, we are playing too inconsistent for me. The overall goal for me is to see growth with each game.”

Saluda is off to a 9-3 overall start after opening region play with a 61-24 victory over **Pelion** on January 16.

The returning starters are sophomore guard **Cedrianna Springs**, junior guard **JaBria Brunson** and sophomore small forward **Amaya Abney**. Springs is not only a returning starter, but a returning All-State selection. She was named to the **South Carolina Basketball Coaches Association** AA All-State team as a freshman. She scored her 1,000th career point earlier this season.

The newcomers to the starting lineup are freshmen in guard **Angie Rios** and center **McKinley Wilder**, who is the head coach’s daughter. Supplying big minutes off the bench are junior center **Chastity Williams** and freshman guard **Nyla Jordan**.

Other members of the team are senior center **Jakiyiha Myers**, junior wing **Ania Etheredge**, sophomore shooting guard **Taraji Etheredge** and freshman power forward **Ashlynn Vereen**.

“We are a fairly young team with only one senior on the roster,” said Wilder, who is in her 18th season as head coach. “With that being said, there are times that we lack leadership on and off the court. This is

something that we are working toward improving each day.

“The biggest area of improvement (we need) is just being consistent. Doing the little things each day will handle the big things.”

CJ SPRINGS LEADING THE WAY FOR SALUDA BOYS

Like his younger sister, **CJ Springs** was an All-State selection last year, named to the SCBCA AA boys All-Sate team. The odds are the 6-foot-3-inch point guard is going to repeat.

Springs was averaging 28 points a game through the first 10 games. He was named to the all-tournament team in the **High Country Holiday Classic** at **Wartmouth High School** in **Boone, North Carolina**.

The Tigers won eight of their first 13 games and started region play with a 1-1 record. They fell to **American Leadership Academy** 58-49 in the region opener before topping **Pelion** 58-46..

Saluda head coach **Jimmy Kinard** thinks his team is starting to come together.

“I’m excited about the possibilities for this team as we enter region play,” Kinard said. “We have dealt with some injuries early in this season, but are starting to get guys back healthy now. We will have to continue to improve handling defensive pressure as the season progresses if we are to have a successful region season.”

Junior center **Jahmeer Myers** was an All-Region pick along with Springs last season. “Jahmeer is playing well on the interior for our team,” Kinard said.

Kinard also cited senior guard Jamiyias Myers or his performance.


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LEARNERS FOR LIFE

Gasque, continued from pg. 21

take Psychology. Gasque looks forward to going to college and a business career afterwards.

When asked what NETC does to help her prepare for school after graduation, Gasque said, “Taking online classes gives me familiarity with college classwork,” she said. “It gives me the experience of completing college level work before I arrive on campus and keeps me from being completely thrown into it.”

Gasque rates her overall experience as positive, saying the dual enrollment classes are; “Different

Mew, continued from pg. 21

college work, and this helps me balance my schedule for my classes,” he said. ” By taking these classes my NETC classes will transfer, and they will count for freshman required classes which will put me ahead in my academic load.”

Summerville, continued from pg. 18

regular decision.

Summerville dropped to 14-5 in dual matches with a 1-1 mark in Region 8-AAAAA. The Green

than anything I’ve had to do before, but not in a bad way,” she said. “You must look for the positives sometimes as you are working through the assignments. I see a real benefit to getting an advanced taste of college classes, which helps me as a student, and one or two completed classes could reduce my course load.”

As a high school student, being a hard-working cheerleader while also playing spring sports, plus being enrolled in the NETC online classes, how does Gasque manage her time? “I have to plan, so

When asked about a memorable moment in his sports career, Mew said, “Last year, I was new on the golf team, and we made it to state,” he said. “I got to play, and that first time hearing my name called to tee off, with me being new to the sport,


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there is a balance in everything between school, sports, and life,” she said. “I put together a schedule that enables me to get all the course work completed so I don’t have to give up on doing other things.”

Gasque reflected on a favorite memory cheering. “The end of each season is an emotional time,” she said. “We worked hard together at practice and games. It’s a point where we reflect on how much joy there has been, as we became a team working together as friends, helping each other every step of the way.”

was special. Even better, I addressed the ball for the tee shot and it was the best drive I ever hit at that point.”

Both Marion hoops teams start seasons 11-7

By Dennis Brunson
hssr.com Associate Editor
Marion – The **Marion High School** boys basketball team has just two returning starters from last year’s 12-15 team. Not only are the Swamp Foxes in-experienced in the starting lineup, but on the team as a whole. There are only two seniors on the roster.

Marion head coach **DJ Kelly** said that hasn’t deterred his team in its development.
“This team has never stopped growing since the start of the summer,” said Kelly, whose team won 11 of its first 18 games and started 3-2 in Region 7-AA. “We are learning every day. They are a resilient group of young men who want to leave a legacy of excellence.

“We don’t worry about the expectations. We respect them but we focus on growth and development. They are doing both of these at a high level, and we will ensure that we never stop growing and developing.”

The two returning starters are senior **Charles White II** and freshman **Jayden Nowlin**. White is by and far the offensive leader with a scoring average of 19.9 points per game. He’s also pulling down 6.5 rebounds.

Nowlin leads in rebounding with a 9.1 average and shares the lead in steals at 2.7. He is scoring at a 7.0 clip and averaging 2.1 assists.

The other three starters are junior **Joshaun Grant**, sophomore **Ian Gause Jr.** and junior **Kamari Watson**. Grant leads in assists at 3.9 and shares the lead in steals to go with 8.7 points and 4.5 rebounds.

The 6-foot-8-inch Gause is a force around the basket. He is averaging 2.1 blocked shots and 7.9 rebounds and 10.8 points. Watson is averaging 3.5 points.

Other members of the playing rotation are sophomore **Rodrick Dickerson**, sophomore **Jacaurie Brown**, senior **Willie Cross**, sophomore **Kamarie Reddick** and junior **Dereon Legette**. Dickerson is averaging 7.2 points and 3.9 rebounds, while Brown is averaging 4.5 points and 3.4 rebounds.

“We simply have to remain focused, patient and disciplined,” Kelly said. “The goal at hand is to be better than we were yesterday. This means extreme preparation by our staff and going 1-0 every single

Mullins boys off to 5-1 start in region play so far

By Dennis Brunson
hssr.com Associate Editor
Mullins – The overall record for the **Mullins High School** boys basketball team through its first 19 games was 12-7. However, the Auctioneers won five of their first six Region 7-AA games, and head coach **Eric Troy** believes the mediocre overall record is largely responsible for that.

“I feel really good about where we stand right now,” Troy said. “We have been battle-tested over the holidays and had solid performances against pretty good, bigger schools.”

Mullins has faced one AAAAA school, one AAAAA school and six AAA schools. The Auctioneers are 3-5 in those games with all five losses coming by 11 points or less.

Mullins is led by the junior 1-2 punch of **Deyon Ford** and **Dakarai Worley**. A 6-foot wing, Worley is averaging an impressive double-double of 18.6 points per game with a team high rebounding average of 14.6. He also leads in steals at 3.6 and was averaging 3.5 assists.

Ford leads in both scoring and rebounding with averages of 20.2 and 4.0, respectively. He was also averaging 4.4 rebounds and 3.0 steals.

KJ Ford was averaging 8.2 points, 2.5 steals and 2.1 assists. Senior **Amir Lee** was averaging 6.4 points and 5.8 rebounds, senior **Andre Littlejohn** was averaging 5.4 points and 4.5 rebounds, and senior **Braden Hughes** was averaging 3.9 points and 3.2 rebounds.

Troy, who has led the Auctioneers to a 55-20

day. When we make up in our mind that we will be mentally mature, our team goals will remain in reach.”

MARION GIRLS ALSO START 11-7

Like the boys, the Marion girls basketball team won 11 of its first 18 games. However, the ladies won only two of their five region contests.

First-year head coach **Justice Gee** likes the way her team has performed, but she knows improvement is necessary.

“I feel encouraged by the direction we’re heading, but I’m also very clear-eyed about where we still need to grow,” Gee said. “The way we train, prepare, and compete is much closer to the standards we set at the start. Our understanding of roles has improved, individual confidence is stronger across the group, and the team is starting to trust the process rather than chasing short-term results.

“That said, the process isn’t linear. There are moments when execution drops, especially under pressure, which tells us we’re still learning how to sustain our level for longer stretches, working on stronger communication and not dwelling on mistakes for too long. The encouraging part is that those issues are correctable, and the players are receptive to feedback and accountability.”

Senior **Maliyah Williams** was the leading scorer at 10.4. Senior **Shamya McKelvey** was averaging 9.2 and sophomore **Ashanti Gause** 8.8. Senior **Sheteira Bethae** was the leading rebounder at 7.3 to go with a 6.8 scoring average.

BRIAN HENNECY NO LONGER FOOTBALL COACH

Brian Hennecy is no longer the football head coach after five seasons.

The Swamp Foxes have struggled mightily the past two seasons. They were winless this past season with a 0-10 record after going 1-9 in 2024.

Hennecy’s first three seasons were vastly different though. Marion went 8-1 in Hennecy’s first season in 2021, 8-3 in 2022 and 10-2 in 2023.

Hennecy had a 27-25 record.

GIRLS BASKETBALL STARTS 2-9

The Mullins girls basketball team is in its first season under the guidance of head coach **Alex White**. The season hasn’t come close to starting the way White had hoped for as the Auctioneers won only two of their first 11 games and started 1-5 in Region 7.



White said he had no real anticipation one way or the other on what the season might hold.

“I didn’t have any expectations coming into the season,” White said. “This is my first year here at Mullins. At this point we’re just changing the culture, getting better fundamentally and learning to compete at a high level consistently.”

Consistency has been the biggest issue for Mullins to date. It lost to defending region champion and lower state runner-up **Lake City** by four points and has been competitive in several other games. Then there have been some blowouts along the way.

The Auctioneers have three returning starters from last season’s 7-9 team that reached the state playoffs. Two of them are sophomore guards **NaRiyah Woodberry** and **Breanna Ford**. Wood-

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See Mullins, pg. 68

Colleton County hoopsters enter region play

By David Shelton
Senior Writer
Walterboro – With the non-region slate complete, the **Colleton County** basketball teams are in the thick of region 7-AAAA play, both looking to earn automatic berths to the AAAAA state playoffs in February.

Both teams have been competitive in the early region contests. 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.

The boys team has opened this season with a 7-10 overall record and a 1-2 start in region play. The Cougars have a region win over Beaufort with losses to Bluffton and Hilton Head entering their Jan. 20 game against Bishop England. The roster is pretty much evenly split between seniors and underclassmen but only a handful of players contributed last season.

Through 17 games, the top scorer is senior **Jaqueas Martin**, who averages 9.1 points per game. Junior **Michael Witkin** averages 7.5 points per game. Junior **Galil Frazier** is scoring 8.3 points while grabbing 5.1 rebounds per game and junior **Anthony Hamilton** averages 6.1 points per game. Freshman **Jair Doctor** and **Reginald Manigo** are scoring about four points per game. Senior **Kaidyn Ballard-Frazier** is adding 5.4 points per game. Galil Frazier has been the top rebounder thus far.

Remaining seniors on the team include **Christopher Platts** and **Ronald Youmans**. Filling out the roster are freshmen **Jamal Garrett** and **Jordan Linnen**.

The girls team, coached by **Charles Lindsey**,

Colleton Prep hoops looking to finish strong

BY David Shelton
Senior Writer
Walterboro – It has been more than a decade since the **Colleton Prep** boys basketball program has produced a winning record but that could change this season.

Colleton Prep’s last winning season came during 2009-10 season. Wins have been hard to come by since. Until now. The Warhawks are on pace to produce a winning record this season, picking up 12 wins in their first 16 outings. The win total doubles last year’s win total of six. Colleton Prep had just 13 total victories in the four seasons prior to this season.

Coach **John Caldwell** is still laying a solid foundation for the program in his second season but the Warhawks are no longer a pushover for opponents.

Senior **Mateo Castillo** leads the way this season, averaging 19.4 points and 3.5 assists. Senior **Colin Hiers** adds 14.9 points, 6.8 blocks and 2.8 steals per game while junior **Charlie Walker** averages 8.3 points and 5.7 rebounds per contest.

Junior **Perry Corbett** adds 8.2 points and junior **Cale Owens** averages 4.2 points, 4.5 steals and 4.7 assists per game.

Two other seniors on the team are **Grayson Martin** and **Steven Crosby**. Other juniors are **Caleb Barsha** and **Tylor Reisnor**. The remaining sophomores are **Alex Fargnoli**, **Tre’yeon Ferguson**, **Ben Cain** and **Nick Martin**. Rounding out the roster is fresh-

man **Preston Zeigler**.
The Warhawks have three wins over Holly Hill Academy, two wins over Orangeburg Prep, two wins over Thomas Sumter, two wins over Andrew Jackson Academy, and single wins over Cardinal Newman. St. John’s Christian, Dorchester Academy

The remaining schedule has two games against Faith Christian, two games against Hilton Head Prep, and single games against Dorchester Academy, St. John’s Christian and two games against Patrick Henry.

The girls team, coached by **Belinda McCoy**, is in rebuild mode with a young roster. The team won 17 games last year but lost considerable production to graduation. As of January 16, this year’s team was sitting at 5-8 overall.

The lone senior on the team this winter is **Ava Murray**. Two juniors are **Millie Drew** and **Cecelia Williams**. **Bre Cain** and **Ann Howell** are sophomores, with eighth-graders **Cooper White** and **Brooklyn Whitley** rounding out the roster.

The girls team recorded wins so far against Andrew Jackson Academy (twice), Holly Hill Academy (twice) and Thomas Sumter Academy.
Remaining games on the schedule include two games each against Patrick Henry, Faith Christian and Hilton Head Prep and single games against St. John’s Christian and Dorchester Academy.

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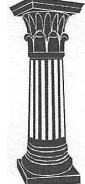
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Johnsonville boys hoops learning on the run

By David Shelton
Senior Writer

Johnsonville – The **Johnsonville** boys basketball team is hoping the old adage of “it’s not how you start but how you finish” rings true this season.

The Flashes had a rough start to the 2025-26 season. Competing against a tough non-region schedule through the month of December, the Flashes managed just one win in 11 tries. But scheduling tough served a purpose and coach **Casey Geter** feels it has paid dividends as the Flashes reach the important region phase of the season.

Johnsonville has had a solid 3-2 start to region play and Geter likes his team’s chances of success down the stretch.

“The players liked the early schedule because they know how important it is to be tested and pushed. They wanted the challenge,” Geter said. “We played seven teams that were ranked in their classification. We played AAAAA teams like Goose Creek, Socastee and Goose Creek. Teams like Waccamaw, Mullins, Andrews, Georgetown, Marion and Bishop England are quality playoff level teams.

“We never got discouraged with the early losses. We went out and competed against good teams. We were prepared for a tough region and we were able to create some good depth.”

Geter wants his team to be defensive-minded and to play fast so establishing depth was important.

“We can go 10 deep or so and we need that,” he said. “We don’t have much size but we are athletic and quick. We don’t lose a lot going to the bench. We have some guys who don’t score much but they bring it defensively. We would not be able to play full court without depth. Most teams in 1A will not be able to handle the amount of pressure we will apply for 32 minutes.”

Geter has just one senior on the roster but he says **Tahkari Ross** is the team’s most complete player and a team leader.

“He’s our best player and a great leader,” he said.

Latta hoops teams both out to strong starts

By Dennis Brunson
hssr.com Associate Editor

Latta – With four starters back from a team that finished second in its region and won a game in the Class A state playoffs, the **Latta High School** boys basketball team won nine of its first 12 games and started 4-1 in Region 6.

None of that has come as a surprise to Vikings head coach **Chris Page**.

“Yes, we have played to what I expected,” said Page, who is in his third season as head coach. “Trusting the process and working as a unified team is key to achieving our goals.”

The four returning starters are senior **Adrian McDonald**, junior **Shayon McGruder**, senior **XY’mari Bethea** and senior **Isaiah McRae**. The newcomer to the starting lineup is sophomore **Joe’Maurie Galloway**.

Latta has two players scoring in double figures in McGruder and McRae. McGruder is averaging 14.9 points per game while pulling down 3.4 rebounds. McRae is averaging a double-double with a 10.5 scoring average while grabbing 10.2 rebounds.

McDonald is the assists leader at 3.6 and shares the team lead in steals at 2.5 with Galloway and Bethea while scoring 5.3 points and grabbing 4.5 rebounds. Bethea is averaging 6.4 points and 6.6 rebounds, and Galloway is averaging 7.1 points.

Other key performers in the rotation are senior **J.P. Bley**, junior **Anthony Williams**, senior **Landon Waugh** and junior **Dezmond Bethea**.

The goal over the course of the season is a simple one.

“We just want to continue building confidence

“He’s been on fire in the region. He’s had four games in the 20’s as far as points go and we lean on him as our most experienced guy. The non-region competition helped him raise his level of play.”

Jamere Ross, a junior cousin of Tahkari, also has raised his play in region games. He scored 30 points in a win over Hemingway. Junior **Zaghe Davis** is the starting point guard and does a good job of keeping the team focused and engaged, according to Geter. Juniors **Skylar Montgomery** and **Rondell Livingston** also start and are solid defenders with their athleticism.

Off the bench are juniors **Kelhan Timmons**, **Zykiel Cooper** and **Shawn Wilson**; sophomores **Brad Eaddy**, **Wes Sylvester** and **Jahkeem Hampton**; freshmen **Dereon Livingston** and **Jackson Player**; and seventh-grader **Caron Geter**.

Geter feels Carver’s Bay is the team to beat in the region but Green Sea Floyds and Latta are solid contenders as well. Overall, the region is balanced.

“I think it’s one of those years where you have to show up and play well every night or you get beat,” he said. “Carver’s Bay is the team to beat but I think it’s wide open after that. We expect to be in the hunt. 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.”

Johnsonville played Carver’s Bay on Jan. 20th and play Latta on Jan. 23rd. The early region wins came against Lake View, Hannah-Pamplico and Hemingway. The Flashes lost to Latta and Green Sea Floyds the first time through the region. They play Green Sea Floyds again on Jan. 27th, Hemingway on Jan. 30th, Lake View on Feb. 3rd, Carver’s Bay on Feb. 9th, and Hannah-Pamplico on Feb. 11th.

Johnsonville’s girls team has struggled this season, losing their first eight games and going 0-4 in region play.

Football team finishes with 9-3 record

See **Johnsonville**, pg. 68

every time we play the game,” Page said.

LATTA GIRLS UNDEFEATED IN REGION

The Latta girls basketball team has come out of the gate fast in region play. The Vikings won their first five region contests and won 10 of their first 12 games.

Aliyah Tisdale, a 5-foot-10-inch sophomore center, is leading the way with a double-double average. She is averaged 14.8 points and 12.6 rebounds, both team highs, to go with 3.4 steals and 1.0 blocks.

Two other Vikings are scoring in double figures. Senior **Kaliya Herman** was averaging 13.8 points and a team 4.8 steals to go with 2.4 assists and 5.8 rebounds. Junior **Jeziyah Page** is the assists leader at 2.6 to go with an 11.0 scoring average and 4.6 steals.

Sophomore **Summer Page** is averaging 5.7 points, 4.1 rebounds and 3.7 steals. Sophomore **Ke’nyah Page** was pulling down 6.2 rebounds to go with 2.9 points.

Others getting key minutes off the bench are sophomore **Ny’asia Jennings** and freshman **Aubrey Williams**.

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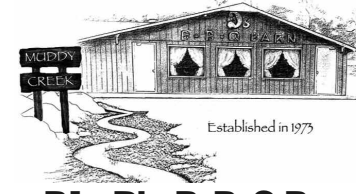
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Lady Patriots prepping for deep playoff run

By: Gerald Doolittle
Special to the HSSR

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 Playoffs**.

Last season the Lady Patriots faced the **Curtis Baptist Lady Crusaders** in the finals and came up short of the title with a 56-36 loss. The two teams have already faced each other twice this season with the Lady Patriots winning the first 56-43 and the Lady Crusaders won the second 42-23.

With seven games left in regular season the Lady Patriots stand 3-0 in region play and 7-4 over-all. They have region games left with **Newberry Academy, W.W. King Academy** and **Richard Winn Academy**. Non-re-

Knights heating up for stretch run this season

By: Gerald Doolittle
Special to the HSSR

Batesburg-Leesville, S.C. -The **W.W. King Academy Knights** coached by **Dennis Gibson** are getting it together for a stretch run competing in **SCISA Region 3-A** where they are competing against **Anderson Christian, Cambridge Academy, Newberry Academy, Richard Winn Academy** and **Wardlaw Academy**.

The Knights started the 2025-26 season losing their first three games. The Knights started the season a little rusty after they had played an extended football season that ended with a 12-0 record and a State Championship. Ten of the 15 players on the basketball roster played on that football team.

The Knights now are playing much better after the slow- start, winning four of the last six games. They enter the second half of the season with a 3-3 region and 4-5 overall record. They now have six region games left and non-region games left against **Laurens Academy, South Aiken Baptist** and **Mead Hall**.

Laurens Academy girls rolling again this season

By **Dennis Brunson**
hssr.com Associate Editor

Laurens – The **Laurens Academy** girls basketball won 15 of its first 16 games and started 2-0 in **SCISA Region 4-AA**. Not a bit of it has come as a surprise to head coach **Jason Marlett**.

“We have played at a level I believed this group could play with their experience level and competitiveness,” Marlett said.

That experience level includes having four returning starters from last year’s squad that played for the AA state championship. The newest member to the lineup was a key member of the rotation.

Leading the way is reigning Region Player of the Year **Braylee Burke**, an eighth-grader. The other returning starters are sophomores **Mackenzie Runyans** and **Sadie Bruyere** and senior **Madisyn Graham**. The fifth starter is freshman **Brooklyn Senn**.

Burke is averaging 12.0 points and 5.5 rebounds per game to lead LA to go with 2.0 assists. Bruyere and Runyans share the assists lead at 4.0. Bruyere is averaging 9.0 points and 5.0 rebounds, while Runyans is scoring at a 7.5 clip to go with 3.5 rebounds. Senn is averaging 9.0 points and 3.0 rebounds. Graham is at 5.0 points 4.5 rebounds.

Providing big minutes off the bench are junior **Makayla Lindley** and sophomore **Brooke Abercrombie**.

Other members of the team are senior **Taylor Cagle**, sophomore **EP Terry** and freshmen **Lorelai Bagwell**, **Hadley Knox** and **Landry Doolittle**.

“We focus on improvement every day in practice,” Marlett said. “We can control effort and how hard we work, and we trust that those traits will allow us to be the best team we can be as the season progresses.”

BOYS BASKETBALL STARTS 9-9

The LA boys basketball team’s longest winning

gion games are left against **South Aiken Baptist (2 games)**, **Holly Hill Academy** and **Jefferson Davis Academy**.

Before the State Playoffs the Lady Patriots hope to win the **SCISA Region 3-A tournament** title where they will compete against **W.W. King, Newberry** and **Richard Winn**.

The Lady Patriots offense has been powered by **Taylor Hill (sr)**, **Katherine Trotter (sr)** and **Brianna McNeil (sr)**. The three seniors have gotten strong play from 8th graders **Mary Blanche Stark** and **Savannah McNeil**.

Rounding out the Lady Patriots roster are **Brooklyn Proctor (fr)**, **Trinity Santiago (so)**, **Lillie Stocum (so)** and **Charlotte Grace Culver (fr)**.

The Knights have been led by the three upper classmen in **Wyatt Burbank (sr)**, **Spencer McCormick (sr)** and **Landell Anderson (jr)**.

Backing up those three are the seven sophomores **Bubba Buzhardt**, **Whitaker Graham**, **Joseph Morse**, **Colby Buzhardt**, **Joey Bradley**, **Tucker Mayyou** and **Joshua Oswald**.

Rounding out the Knight roster are the five freshmen **Tucker McGinty**, **Drayton Wannamaker**, **Brady Goff**, **Jackson Hutto** and **Jayden Deese**.

The region wins so far has been over **Richard Winn (30-29)**, **Wardlaw (54-40)** and **Anderson Christian (60-50)**. The region defeats have been to **Anderson Christian (34-41)**, **Cambridge (30-40)** and **Newberry (32-34)**.

The Knights are hoping for a winning stretch run to propel them into the post-season where they hope for another Championship.

Coach Gibson sees a bright future for the Knights the next two seasons with seven sophomores and five freshmen returning.

streak has been two. On the other hand, the lengthiest losing streak is just three. And that’s why the Crusaders sit with a 9-9 record.

“It is odd to win one, lose one as much as we have,” said Laurens head coach **Travis Plowden**. “A lot of that has to do with our schedule. We’ve played a tough schedule.”

LA’s leading scorer is 6-foot-5-inch, 300-pound senior **Garrison Vaughan** with a 13.2 average. He also leads in rebounding at 6.8.

Senior 4-year starter **Brayden Burke**, who scored his 1,00th career point earlier this year, is averaging 12.4 points and 3.9 boards. Sophomore point guard **Micah Strait** is averaging 7.7 and a team high 2.9 assists.

The other starters are juniors **Caleb Hardy** and **Chesney Watkins**. Hardy is averaging 4.1 points and Watkins 4.5.

Seeing regular minutes in the rotation are juniors **Ethan Collins**, **Evan Asalone** and **Elijah Hornberger** and freshman **Elias Littleton**.

Others on the roster are senior **John Walters III**, junior **Hunter Campbell**, sophomores **Cade Kohler** and **Aiden Graddick** and freshmen **Reid Campbell** and **Kolton Ferrell**.

We want to be a good team and to do that you have to find a way to beat good teams,” Plowden said. “We want to get better and battle through. We’ve already won one more game than last year.”



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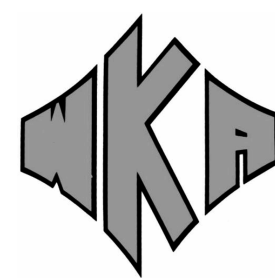
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2025-26 Hilton Head Prep boys basketball

Young Hilton Head Prep hoops teams in progress

By David Shelton
Senior Writer
Hilton Head – The **Hilton Head Prep** boys and girls basketball teams are going through a rebuilding phase with a host of young players filling key roles this season. Both programs have new head coaches as well.

The girls program is under new direction as **Johnny Campbell** takes over as head coach. Campbell has a very inexperienced roster as the team has struggled to a 3-13 start this season. However, a win over rival Hilton Head Christian on Jan. 16 may kickstart the team into a successful stretch run. The season started with nine losses but is 3-4 over the last seven games.

The team has three seniors this season. Those leaders are **Riley Wilbert**, **Merritt Risher** and **Erin Cleary**. Three sophomores are **Sophie Moe**, **Charlie Fry** and **Molly Lorenz**, while **Avery Shroyer** and **Madelyn Dooley** are freshmen. Eighth-graders include **Kate Pagan**, **Adrianna Palazzo** and **Victoria Hawkins**, with seventh-grader **Marilyn Henry** rounding out the roster.

Pagan leads the team in scoring at 11.5 points per game while Cleary adds 6.9 points per game.

Brown happy with Hilton Head Christian boys team

By Dennis Brunson
hssr.com Associate Editor
Bluffton – The record shows the **Hilton Head Christian Academy** boys basketball team winning just four of its first 14 games. While that’s a fact, Eagles head coach **Bryan Brown** doesn’t think that tells the whole story of his team’s season.
“The team has played up to expectations,” Brown said. “They have a strong strength of schedule and have had to learn how to grow as a team against good competition. Most of our team is playing their first year of varsity basketball, first year of significant minutes, and many of them have not played together. It takes time to build chemistry, but they are growing every day and we are proud of their effort.”

Hilton Head Christian has three players returning from last season in junior **Jake Wood**, senior **Finn Ussery** and senior **Maddox Norcross**. Wood is the leading scorer and rebounder with per-game averages of 18.4 and 5.8, respectively. Ussery is averaging 11.5 points to go with a team high 2.4 assists, and Norcross is averaging 4.6 points.

Brown has been liberally altering the starting lineup, trying to find the best combination of starters and those coming off the bench. Along with the three aforementioned players, senior **Killian Gibson**, sophomore **Davis Taylor**, sophomore **Sam Strum**, sophomore **Michael O’Connell**, sophomore **Chase White** and sophomore **Brennan Steiner** are regulars in the rotation.

Strum is the third leading scorer at 5.5 and the second leading rebounder at 4.5. White is averaging

Moe is the top rebounder at 7.8 boards per game while Wilbert adds nearly five rebounds per game.

The boys program has won three consecutive state titles but lost eight seniors and have a new head coach as **Mike Strickland** takes over this season. The Dolphins are off to a 5-10 start overall this season but the goal is to gel by playoff time. There is not significant production returning off last year’s team so players are learning and defining new roles.

“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.”

The top returners from last season are seniors **Tyler Britschge** and **Alston Adams**. Both are starters and have solid experience. Britschge averages 3.0 points and 5.5 rebounds this season while Adams contributes about two points and two boards per game.

The roster is full of underclassmen. Sophomore 4.8 points.

Other members of the team are senior **Tommy Gehm** and senior **Ethan Maloney**.

The Eagles started 1-1 in SCISA Region 3-AAAA. Brown hopes that is a sign of good things to come.

“Ultimately, our goal has been to prepare for region play,” Brown said. “To be ready for a playoff push, we need to meet our goal of playing our best basketball during region play. Our region is full of competitive teams, so we will have to be ready to be our best night in and night out.”

HILTON HEAD CHRISTIAN GIRLS START 1-14

The Hilton Head Christian girls basketball team won only one of its first 15 games. The Eagles are in their first season under head coach **Matt Payton**, and he thinks he knows the main reason for the struggles.

“We are very young,” Payton said. “We have 11 players and only three upperclassmen. We have one returning starter from last year.”

The returning starter is sophomore **Sissy**

Thompson. She led Hilton Head Christian in both scoring and rebounding last season with averages of 7.4 and 9.7, respectively.

The most consistent starting lineup includes senior **Emma Thompson**, freshman **Emma Reese**, freshman **Lelia Cepek** and freshman **Emma Kate Strebe**. Others seeing significant minutes off the

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Yusif Yeldiz is leading the team in scoring at 14.5 points per game while dishing 4.7 assists. Sophomore **Sammy Middleton** contributes 10.3 points and 5.3 boards per game. Freshman **Ty Eanes** is scoring 10.2 points while pulling down nearly four rebounds per game. Junior **Max Diamond** has been a starter as well.

Ross Peery is a sophomore transfer from Cross School and is adding 5.5 points per game, Senior **Wyatt Harner**, sophomore **Freddy Moise** and freshman **Mikey Dowling** (7.7 ppg) also figure into the mix.

“We will play eight or nine guys pretty regularly,” 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 guys will be asked to contribute.”

HILTON HEAD CHRISTIAN



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bench are junior **Brinkley Smith**, eighth-grader **Caroline Mahl** and senior **Annika Muthersbaugh**.

Other members of the team are sophomore **Anna Williams**, freshman **Henley Scarbro** and freshman **Stella Doerger**.

With being such a young team, Payton said there is a lot of room for improvement.

“For us to do better in the second half the key is for us to take care of the ball a lot better,” Payton said. “We are really young and playing against older, more established players. We have to do a better job at converting our layups and our free throws.”

Hannah-Pamplico basketball looks to end strong

By David Shelton
Senior Writer
Pamplico – With less than a month remaining in the regular season, the boys and girls basketball teams at **Hannah-Pamplico High** are aiming to finish strong and earn a spot in the Class A state playoffs.

Both teams have struggled a bit this season but there are games coming up down the stretch that are winnable.

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 sits at 5-13 overall and 1-4 in region play as of Jan. 17. The Raiders won eight games last season and won five region games.

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. “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 games.”

Williams starts two seniors at forward and three juniors at guard. The forwards are **Va’Shon Washington** and **Dakhi Thomas**. Washington is averaging 6.4 points and 8.8 rebounds this season while Thomas is averaging 5.1 points and 9.0 rebounds

Batesburg-Leesville boys looking for strong finish

By Dennis Brunson
hssr.com Associate Editor
Batesburg-Leesville – The **Batesburg-Leesville High School** boys basketball team had quite the season in the 2024-25 campaign.

The Panthers, who finished with a 17-8 overall record, won their first region championship since the 2005-06 season. The Panthers then reached the quarterfinals of the AA state playoffs for the first time since the 1988-89 campaign.

B-L returns four starters from that team. It won eight of its first 14 games and began defense of its Region 2 title on January 13 against **Strom Thurmond**. Head coach **William Ash** thinks the best is yet to come.

“We scheduled a tough non-region schedule with four games against AAAA teams, one game against a AAAAA team, three games versus AAA teams and a game versus a AAAA SCISA team,” Ash said. “I do not believe that we have played to our potential yet this season. That starts with me as head coach. I have not been good enough at getting the level of intensity at times from this group. We have high expectations for our season and need to work harder to meet them.”

The four returning starters are senior **Ta’Maj Gilliam**, junior **Braylen Davis**, senior **Naesean Stewart** and senior **KD Whitt**. Davis is the leading scorer with an average of 20.8 points per game. He also leads in assists at 2.9 and steals at 2.2 while pulling down an even five rebounds a contest.

Gilliam is the returning Region Player of the Year along with being selected to the **South Carolina Basketball Coaches Association** AA All-State team. He is averaging 17.8 points and 3.0

per game and is the vocal leader of the team.
Filling starting roles at guard are **De’Auje Bacchus**, **Kolby Hyman** and **Dylan Smith**. Bacchus is the top scoring threat at 12.7 points per game. He also grabs 5.7 boards per outing. Hyman scores 5.0 points per game.

Seeing time off the bench early this season are senior guard **Jordyn Livingston**, senior forward **Chris Eldridge**, junior forward **Matthew Richardson**, and junior guards **Tevin Ellis** and **Kai’den Fortune**. Ellis is adding 6.6 points per game.

Rounding out the roster are seniors **Alex Edwards**, **Stokes Scott** and **Mahkai Eaddy**; and juniors **Jaiden Bostick**, **Aviary Lyerly** and **Gerald Connor**.

Manning takes over the girls program that finished 1-16 last season. The team has shown improvement and is more competitive overall, winning three of their first 11 games and posting a 1-4 region record. 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.

Starters this season are sophomore **Jakayla Davis** and senior **JaKiya Wilson** at guard, senior **Khloe Jones** on the wing, junior **Jalaya Graham** and forward, and sophomore **Genesis Freshley** in the post.

First off the bench are senior guard **Tylaysha Ross**, junior guard **ZaMiyah Jones**, freshman guard

rebounds. Stewart shares the lead in rebounding at 5.9 to go with a 3.5 scoring average. Whitt’s averaging 2.1 points and 3.6 rebounds.

The newcomer to the starting lineup is senior **Jaden Millhouse**. Along with sharing the rebounding lead with Stewart, Millhouse is averaging 6.8 points.

Batesburg-Leesville has a deep bench as senior **Amadr’e Wooden**, senior **Cameron Martin**, senior **JR Stewart**, freshman **Terrance Cook** and sophomore **Marshon Chaney** provide valuable minutes.

Martin averages 4.2 points, 3.9 rebounds, 2.3 assists an 1.3 steals, JR Stewart 4.2 points and 3.3 rebounds, Cook 3.1 points, Wooden 2.1 points and Chaney 1.5 points.

While the Panthers have a lot of returning players, being the hunted instead of the hunter has led to the team having to develop a different sort of chemistry, according to Ash.

“The dynamic this year was different and it was based on high expectations,” he said. “Those expectations create pressure, but pressure is a privilege. When you have success and you have eight players returning you want to build on that success.” Ash believes very good things are within B-L’s reach.

“We need to continue to play with effort and intensity,” he said. “We need to stay committed to our goals and each other. This group is capable of greatness.”

Batesburg-Leesville plays a 10-game region schedule, facing each of the other five teams twice. In Strom Thurmond, the Panthers are opening region against the team they beat in a special game to determine the region champion after both went 8-2

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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**.

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in the regular season.
The other region teams are **Saluda**, which went 7-3, 4-6 **Pelion**, 4-6 **American Leadership Academy** and 0-10 **Ninety Six**.

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Seawell’s Midlands Feature Page

Midlands Area hoops heating up as the season progresses

By WORTHY EVANS
Special to the HSSR
Columbia - With the restart of boys and girls basketball following the winter tournaments, teams are battling it out in their regions over the next month to determine the champions. With many teams in the Columbia-Lexington area hoping to do better than last season—or defend their state crowns, it’s a guarantee that roundball fans in high school gyms across the region will be in for some great basketball games.

Some great games are already in the books. **Westwood**, ranked second behind **Greenville** in the South Carolina Basketball Coaches Association’s 5A Division 2 rankings, took on defending 5A Division I champion **Ridge View**, ranked second in the SCBCA’s 5A Division 1 rankings, in their Region 5-5A contest Jan. 5.

That night, the Redhawks (16-1, 5-0) overcame two double-digit deficits to pull off a 64-61 victory over the defending 5A Division I champion **Blazers** (16-3, 4-1 Region 5-5A) before a packed Westwood gym.

Guard **D’Marcus Thomas** led the way for Westwood with four 3-pointers late in the game and a game-high 28 points on the night. Fellow guards **Cylan McLeod** and **Jayden Crews** also had double figures, with McLeod putting up 14 points and Crews adding 10.

The first four minutes of the game were not so good for the Redhawks. Ridge View opened up by building a 12-0 lead by that point. McLeod broke the drought with a 3 at the 3:55 mark, which sparked a 14-4 Westwood scoring run that put the Redhawks to within 16-14 to start the second quarter.

“We got out-toughed in the first couple of minutes but it was a rivalry game and we knew this was gonna happen,” Westwood head coach **Trent Robinson** said. “They overcame that and if that wasn’t enough, they got down in the second half and they overcame that. They’re the heart and soul, they’re a great group and I love ‘em.”

The Blazers outscored the Redhawks 14-10 in the second quarter to go into halftime with a 30-24 lead.

Ridge View opened the second half with another surge to take a 38-27 lead after the first two minutes of play, but Westwood’s defense began making more stops and the Redhawks shooters kept the game within single digits.

The Blazers held a 44-36 lead when Crews drained a 3 at the 1:46 mark of the third. Seconds later Thomas hit a basket and followed up with a 3 to get Westwood to within 46-44 going into the fourth quarter.

Thomas’s last two scores in the third quarter, coupled with the Red-

Midlands Boys Top Ten	Midlands Girls Top Ten
1. Westwood (16-1, 5-0 Region 5-5A)2. 2. Ridge View (16-3, 4-1 Region 5-5A) 3. Dutch Fork (16-2, 3-0 Region 4-5A) 4. Gray Collegiate (14-2, 6-0 Region 4-4A) 5. Brookland-Cayce (13-4, 4-2 Region 4-4A) 6. Keenan (15-5, 2-0 Region 4-3A) 7. CA Johnson (11-7, 7-0 Region 2-1A) 8. Camden (12-5, 2-2 Region 3-4A) 9. Irmo (13-5, 1-2 Region 4-5A) 10. Ben Lippen (15-7, 4-0 SCISA Region 1-4A)	1. Blythewood (14-4, 5-0 Region 5-5A) 2. Irmo (14-4, 3-0 Region 4-5A) 3. Lexington (14-3, 2-1 Region 4-5A) 4. Camden (15-1, 3-1 Region 3-4A) 5. Dutch Fork (10-5, 2-1 Region 4-5A) 6. Lower Richland (11-3, 3-1 Region 5-4A) 7. Gray Collegiate (12-4, 5-1 Region 4-4A) 8. A.C. Flora (10-5, 4-1 Region 3-4A) 9. Ridge View (9-5, 4-0 Region 5-5A) 10. Ben Lippen (13-6, 3-0 SCISA Region 1-4A)

hawks 8-0 run to open the final quarter, propelled Westwood to a 52-46 lead. Thomas opened the fourth with a fadeaway jumper that was good for 3 and gave the team its first lead of the game, 47-46.

“It was big,” Thomas said about the rally. “We were down coming out of the half, and we just hit threes and played solid D and made our shots. We play D every day, We take pride in our defense.”

The Redhawks used a halfcourt trap in the fourth that caused Ridge View problems with their timing and with moving the ball down the court. The Blazers kept it close, even tying the game at 55 with 2:06 left, but Westwood hung on with effective foul shooting.

“We got real stagnant in the third quarter,” Ridge View head coach **Josh Staley** said. “We didn’t score a ton and we tried to finish the third quarter strong, but they were just a better team tonight. We knew it was going to be a difficult game and we were really worried about the (holiday) lag was kind of funky, but at the end of the day we played our game but they just outplayed us.”

Ridge View’s top scorer **R.J. Davis**, who had 25 points on the night, made a long-distance 3 for the Blazers’ last score. With less than two seconds on the clock, there was nothing that Westwood needed to do other than inbound the ball and let the final 1.7 seconds expire.

“Credit the guys on the beat. We got down by 12 two different times and we had a bad practice yesterday (Sunday), but our guard, 5, stepped up,” head coach Trent Robinson said, referring to Thomas. “The last four games 5 has been good. Been really good and that’s the reason we won. Our guards played tough, played hard, and everybody eventually decided to come on. It was a great win.”

Crews leads the Redhawks in scoring with a 14.5 average. Thomas has pushed his scoring average to 12.4 points per game, and McLeod averages 10.6 points.

Since the loss to the Redhawks, Ridge View reeled off three straight dominating wins over region rivals **Spring Valley**, **Lugoff-Elgin**, and **West Florence**.

Westwood continued its streak with wins over the Vikings, Demons, and the Knights.

With both teams firing on all cylinders, the Westwood-at-Ridge View rematch Jan. 27 is high on the list of top games in the state.

In girls basketball, **Blythewood** has clearly overcome its 1-3 start following losses to top teams **Camden**, **Dorman**, and **North Augusta**.

Thus far into region play, the Bengals (14-4, 5-0 Region 5-5A) has not yet faced solid competition since coming out of winter break.

Going into its home game against **Sumter** Jan. 13, Blythewood has dominated the competition, and their region win streak didn’t stop with the Gamecocks. The Bengals shut out Sumter 19-0 in the first quarter, led 38-2 at halftime and finished with a dominating 53-17 victory.

Chase Thomas scored 19 points, **India Williams** added 11 points and **Kiersten Fulton** put up 10 points to lead the Bengals.

The entire team worked over the Gamecocks in the first half.

“That’s one thing that we’ve been

See Midlands, pg. 69





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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
72. Calvin McCoy-Greer-RB
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?)



Wilson’s
Josh Leonard

Summerville’s
Jayven Williams

Summerville’s
Jaiden Kelly-Murray

Recruiting, continued from Cover

seasons, and he has been to **Clemson** as well. Both in-state schools have him at their 2027 board.

A few years ago, **Dawn Staley** was signing one player a year from within the state over a five- or six-year period but she has not signed anyone since she landed Joyce Edwards from Camden High three years ago.

It’s an ideal time to talk a little about the upcoming 2027 football class in the state of South Carolina.

The state of South Carolina will continue to have more than 45 players sign on with major colleges next season. The 2026 class had 48 players sign with major college football and the HSSR predicts a solid class coming in 2027 as well.

Our number one rated player is Catawba Ridge five star rated defensive back **Joshua Dobson** (6-1,194).

Dobson has trimmed his list down to 12 schools after getting interest from the majority of the 134 major colleges in the nation. His top 12 right now, in know order, are **Alabama**, **Clemson**, **Florida State**, **South Carolina**, **Notre Dame**, **Ohio State**, **Oklahoma**, **Penn State**, **Southern Cal**, **Tennessee**, **Texas A & M** and **Texas Tech**.

This reporter stood with an SEC college coach

watching former Summerville DB/WR Jaiden Kelly-Murray when he was a freshman for the Green Wave and playing mainly defensive back at the time.

This SEC coach was from out-of-state, and he picked out Kelly-Murray fairly easily because he had come to the game to scout two wide receivers that were on opposing teams in the game. He seemed to be impressed with the way Kelly-Murray was locked down on the receiver he was looking at. In fact, it was Kelly-Murray’s defense that only allowed the receiver the recruiter had come to see to catch only one pass for the entire game.

Kelly-Murray has recently transferred to **Oceanside Collegiate** for his senior season. He played more as a wide receiver the past two seasons where he was just as good on the offensive side of the football. In his sophomore and junior seasons Kelly-Murray has caught 145 passes for 2,159 yards and 27 TD’s and he helped lead the Green Wave to back-to-back appearances in the Div. I AAAAA state finals, losing to Dutch Fork both years.

Kelly-Murray has offers from both **Clemson** and **South Carolina** among others.

See Recruiting, pg. 68



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