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Coin Show Info - Page 52

High School Sports Report

Our Goal: Recognizing The Achievements Of Young Athletes

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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

See Recruiting, pg. 37

On the Inside...

Modern Turf Stats.....	3
Boys Basketball Feature.....	4-5
Girls Basketball Feature.....	6-7
SCISA Boys Basketball Feature.....	8
SCISA Girls Basketball Feature.....	9
SCMat.com Wrestling Feature.....	10-11
NETC Student Athletes of the Month....	21
Seawell's Midlands Feature.....	32
Green Acres Basketball Prospects.....	53

TODAY'S STARS



ON THE COURT!

A Message From The
Publisher
Billy G. Baker
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High School Sports Report

Our Goal: Recognizing The Achievements Of Young Athletes

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 hsr.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!

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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 **Andrew Jackson**, continued from pg. 29

and **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 the 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 1/2 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 1/2 TFLs, one PD and caused three fumbles, while Miller had 37 tackles, five TFLs and three sacks.

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

“Normally many new coaches will 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 Heyward 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 have run out of gas in the fourth period, and we need to learn how to finish games.”

~~ SPONSORED HIGH SCHOOL INDEX ~~

Abbeville	40	Cross	26	Hilton Head Prep	38	Orangeburg Prep	48
Andrew Jackson Academy	29	Denmark-Olar	15	Holly Hill Academy	64	Palmetto Christian	45
Andrews	31	Dillon	12	James Island	57	Patrick Henry	47
Ashley Hall	57	Dillon Christian	56	Jefferson Davis	28	Pee Dee Academy	31
Ashley Ridge	19	Dorchester Academy	45	Johnsonville	34	Pinewood Prep	63
Bamberg-Ehrhardt	15	Dutch Fork	56	Kingstree	49	Porter-Gaud	57
Barnwell	14	East Clarendon	17	Lake City	59	Saluda	41
Batesburg-Leesville	35	Emerald	40	Lake View	13	Scott’s Branch	17
Belton-Honea Path	62	First Baptist	63	Lamar	23	Spartanburg Day	60
Berkeley	24	Florence Christian	23	Latta	34	St. John’s Christian	25
Beaufort	46	Fort Dorchester	19	Laurence Manning	22	Stratford	27
Camden	51	Fox Creek	28	Laurens Academy	35	Summerville	18
Cane Bay	24	Gaffney	20	Lee Academy	56	Thomas Heyward	46
Carolina Academy	59	Goose Creek	27	Manning	16	Timberland	25
Carvers Bay	51	Gray Collegiate	42	Marion	30	Wardlaw	39
Central	32	Hammond	55	Marlboro County	61	White Knoll	50
Chapin	36	Hampton County	47	May River	64	Williamsburg Academy	58
Cheraw	39	Hanahan	26	Mullins	30	Wilson Hall	55
Chesterfield	49	Hannah-Pamplico	35	Myrtle Beach	32	Woodland	44
Clarendon Hall	64	Hartsville	61	North Myrtle Beach	33	WW King	39
Colleton County	43	Heathwood Hall	62	Northwood Academy	50		
Colleton Prep	43	Hilton Head Christian	38	Oceanside Collegiate	42		

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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, **Zamario "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

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

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**.

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

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 AAAA 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.

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

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-

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.

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.

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.

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

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 Cyclones 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**,

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	COLT FOWLER
OLIVER BARNES	ANDREW JACKSON	JONATHAN SLAWSON
TRE GREEN	PINEWOOD PREP	PINEWOOD PREP
COLT FOWLER	JAMES F. BYRNES	CALHOUN ACADEMY
JERMIER NELSON	388 SUKHI SINGH	WREN
J J GRAY	387 JAKE WOOD	PROVIDENCE CLASSICAL
THOMAS HESTER	365 WADE MARSH	BLUFFTON
JOSH LEONARD	358 JAMES EPTING	CHESNEE
DAKARI WORLEY	356 COLT FOWLER	SENECA
DEYON FORD	353 BRIAN WASHINGTON JR	GREENWOOD
CLAYTON EVERETT JR	344 MASON WALKER	GREENWOOD
JONOVAN WEBB	340 CREWS FELDER	BURKE
JUSTUS BELL	340 NIGEL MILLER	SHANTAVIA HILLIARD
HERMAN SMITH	334 CHRISTIAN BROWN	CHAPIN
A J WASHINGTON	334 GRAYDEN HUMPHRIES	COLLIER
NICK LINDSAY	327 A J WASHINGTON	MAULDIN
HARRY SKINNER	324	WILSON
J'SEAN SANDERS	323	WILSON
ELIJAH BROWN	321	WILSON
MALIK TINSLEY	316 ZAKARIAN SIMPSON	WILSON
NOAH DODD	311 DAKARI WORLEY	WILSON
AYDEN LEITH	304 CHRISTIAN ACADEMY	WILSON
KENDRICK JACKSON	302 LIBERTY	WILSON
PEYTON JENNINGS	302 WHITE KNOLL	WILSON
CHARLES WHITE II	299 MARION	WILSON
KAVONTAY ROSE	297 RAGIN PREP CHRISTIAN	WILSON
KAYSON DAWSON	294 HARTSVILLE	WILSON
SAMUEL ROSS	293 PENDLETON	WILSON
KAIS PARRIS	292 PINewood PREP	WILSON
DREY JACKSON	279 WREN	WILSON
ZEKE CLYBURN	277 ANDREW JACKSON	WILSON
TAYLOR GREENE	277 FLORENCE CHRISTIAN	WILSON
AVERY RAVENELL	276 ORANGEBURG PREP	WILSON
DEE DAVIS	272 WESTSIDE	WILSON
BRICE WIERNSMA	270 T L HANNA	WILSON
ELIJAH MCCLAIN	270 CHERAW	WILSON
BRAYLEN DAVIS	270 BATESBURG-LEESVILLE	WILSON
TAZIRI WEBBER	270 CENTRAL	WILSON
TRADD LAW	267 ST. JOHNS CHRISTIAN	WILSON
SUKHI SINGH	267 JAMES F. BYRNES	WILSON
	262 A J WASHINGTON	WILSON

REBOUNDS

CHRISTIAN RIVERA	453 BEN REESE	COLT FOWLER
OLIVER BARNES	421 NOAH DODD	JONATHAN SLAWSON
TRE GREEN	390 JONOVAN WEBB	PINEWOOD PREP
COLT FOWLER	388 SUKHI SINGH	CALHOUN ACADEMY
JERMIER NELSON	387 JAKE WOOD	WREN
J J GRAY	365 WADE MARSH	PROVIDENCE CLASSICAL
THOMAS HESTER	358 JAMES EPTING	BLUFFTON
JOSH LEONARD	356 COLT FOWLER	CHESNEE
DAKARI WORLEY	353 BRIAN WASHINGTON JR	SENECA
DEYON FORD	344 MASON WALKER	GREENWOOD
CLAYTON EVERETT JR	340 CREWS FELDER	BURKE
JONOVAN WEBB	340 NIGEL MILLER	WILSON
JUSTUS BELL	334 CHRISTIAN BROWN	WILSON
HERMAN SMITH	334 GRAYDEN HUMPHRIES	WILSON
A J WASHINGTON	327 A J WASHINGTON	WILSON
NICK LINDSAY	324	WILSON
HARRY SKINNER	323	WILSON
J'SEAN SANDERS	321	WILSON
ELIJAH BROWN	316 ZAKARIAN SIMPSON	WILSON
MALIK TINSLEY	311 DAKARI WORLEY	WILSON
NOAH DODD	304 CHRISTIAN ACADEMY	WILSON
AYDEN LEITH	302 LIBERTY	WILSON
KENDRICK JACKSON	302 WHITE KNOLL	WILSON
PEYTON JENNINGS	302 MARION	WILSON
CHARLES WHITE II	299 MARION	WILSON
KAVONTAY ROSE	297 RAGIN PREP CHRISTIAN	WILSON
KAYSON DAWSON	294 HARTSVILLE	WILSON
SAMUEL ROSS	293 PENDLETON	

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 AAAA, Div. II AAAA, 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 AAAA Div. I boy's final 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 final 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 AAAA 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 AAAA 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 AAAA 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 junior PG prospect **Colt Fowler** (24.2 pts), senior F

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

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

The Cobras are led by soph SF **Jamel McKinney** (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 Gathers** (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 Terrell** (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 AAAA Preview:

Goose Creek head coach **Blake Hall** spent a lot of time in his huddle talk with his players following a gut wrenching 81-71 double OT loss in the

SCBCA Elite Players (All Classes)

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

SCBCA AAAA Div. 1 Top Seniors

Justis 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
2. Dorman
3. Dutch Fork
4. Cane Bay
5. Byrnes

SCBCA AAAA 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
2. Westwood
3. Greenville
4. Riverside
5. Fort Mill

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
2. Gray Collegiate
3. Crestwood
4. Brookland-Cayce
5. Wilson

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 newcomers 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

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

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

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."

South Florence

pulls down 3.5 boards.

The South Florence boys are struggling in a brutal 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 double-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 rebounds.

Midlands Feature, continued from pg. 36

focusing on is coming out of the gate with more energy this year," head coach **Emily McElveen-Schaeffer** said. "Last year a lot of times we were fighting back, we'd get off to a slow start and spend the second 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 beginning."

Sumter (10-5, 2-2) had no solution for the Bengals' 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 averaging 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, Blythewood 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 season-opening loss to **Ridge View**, the War Eagles have been improving steadily. As the second half of region play begins, there's no better time for that. Gray beat rival **North Augusta** 64-56 Dec. 16, and the team's road

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 traveling 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

having a strong year in and out of Region 4. Since falling 51-37 to North Augusta Dec. 16, the War Eagles 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.

Beaufort, continued from pg. 46

Another key performer is **Cameron Posey** in the

144-pound weight class. Among female wrestlers, **Olesya Mullins** is the top-ranked wrestler at 105

Carvers Bay, continued from pg. 51

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 Defensive Player of the year the past two seasons.

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

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

South Florence

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

South Florence

pulls down 3.5 boards.

The South Florence boys are struggling in a brutal 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 **Allyson Watson** leads the way in steals 4.1 and is averaging 11.9 points to go with 3.2 assists 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

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

Tahkari Ross, Bricen Howell, Jaiden Miles, River Chambers, Dylan Smith, Austin Harrell, Jay McFadden, Jason Brigham and Brayden Baxley.

Three key returning players next season will be quarterback **Larkin Powell**, running back **Zaghe**

Davis and receiver **Jamere Ross**. Powell will be a third-year starter and Davis will be a fourth-year varsity player. He gained more than 1,000 yards rushing this season.

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 **Brihana 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 Levy** 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 Lyrly** 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 quarterback 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 assists. 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.

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

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 do 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."

Div. II AAAA 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 AAA Boys Preview:

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



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

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

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.

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 Tinsley** (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 to 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 **Jordan 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 Anderson, Jr** (8.4 pts).

Christ Church is head coached by veteran

See Boys Basketball, pg. 67

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
2. St Joseph's
3. Loris
4. Fox Creek
5. Keenan
6. Orangeburg-Wilk.
7. Georgetown
8. Waccamaw
9. Mountain View Prep
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
2. Andrew Jackson
3. Hampton County
4. Liberty
5. Philip Simmons
6. Central
7. Ninety-Six
8. Marion
9. Pelion
10. Mullins

SCBCA Class A Top Seniors

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 AAAA, Div. II AAAA, 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 AAAA Div. I girl's final 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 final 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 final will all be played at the Florence Civic Center on February 27-28. The upper state girl's final will be played on agreed upon neutral sites on February 27-28 also.

Div. I AAAA Girls:

Last year **Blythewood** defeated **Summerville** at the Florence Civic Center to earn the Div. I AAAA state title and the Lady Bengals (14-4, 5-0) are currently ranked number three in the *HSSR* ranking released on January 15.

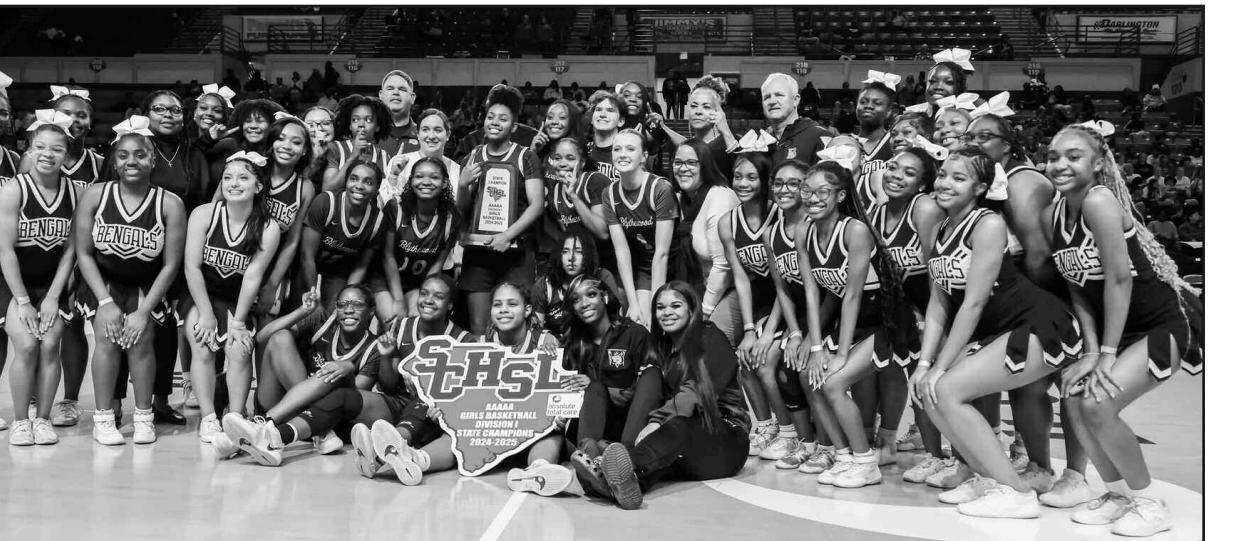
Blythewood returns the talented duo of highly regarded forward **Chase Thomas** who scored 18 points in last year's final along with guard **India Williams** who poured in 22 points. They certainly have the horses to pull the victory wagon into the

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 AAAA Div. 1 Top Seniors

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



2024-25 Girls AAAA 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 AAAA appear to be current 6th ranked **Wando**, seventh ranked **Sumter** along with **Carolina Forest**.

HSSR Prediction For Gold Medal Round:
Dorman or Byrnes versus Wando

Div. II AAAA:

The Div. II AAAA state final 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 final, 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 final. 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-

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 AAAA Div. 2 Top Seniors

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

SCBCA AAAA Top Seniors

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

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

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

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 **Khalid 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 **Chenze 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 final 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 than predicting what two teams are going to meet in the AA boy's final 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 final, 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 final will take place on Thursday March 5 at 2 pm at the USC Colonial Life Arena 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 **Mylajya 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 final 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

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 **Kaielen 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 final in Florence. The Lady Vikings are led by three players in double figures. They include soph F **Alyiah 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.

1. Addie Shaw - Indian Land (Sr., 2025 100 1st, 2024 100 2nd, 2023 Lower 106 2nd)
2. Kymydia Jamison - Bamberg-Ehrhardt (Sr., 2025 100 SQ, 2023 Lower 106 4th)
3. Kamari Smith - South Florence Girls (Sr., 2024 105 SQ)
4. Alora McAtee - Dreher Girls ()
5. Abbie Daniel - ALA Lexington Girls (So.)
6. Natalie Troyan - Northwestern Girls (So.)
7. Marissa Marsar - Ashley Ridge Girls ()
8. Mari Jeffries - Chesnee Girls (Jr.)

105 lbs.

1. Olesya Mullins - Beaufort Girls (Sr., 2025 105 2nd - SC, 2024 100 2nd - MI)
2. Ella Sheppard - Conway Girls (Jr., 2025 105 3rd, 2024 105 2nd)
3. Kamyla Torres - Rock Hill Girls (Jr., 2025 100 4th)
4. Aaliyah Peterson - Hartsville Girls (Sr., 2025 100 SQ, 2024 100 SQ)
5. Gabriella Murillo - Marlboro County Girls (Sr., 2024 105 SQ)
6. Alexia Ray - South Florence Girls (So.)
7. Adesiny Carelock - Chester Girls (So.)
8. Armani Burros - Chester Girls (Fr.)

110 lbs.

1. Madilyn Beck - Rock Hill Girls (Sr., 2025 110 1st, 2024 110 1st, 2023 113 3rd)
2. Emma Sheppard - Conway Girls (Jr., 2025 110 3rd, 2024 110 3rd)
3. Kerrington Ratliff - Northwestern Girls (Jr., 2025 110 4th)
4. Ceanna Owen - Fort Dorchester Girls (So., 2025 105 4th)
5. Karleigh Langley - Belton-Honea Path Girls (So.)
6. Kayliegh Machado - Woodruff Girls ()
7. Lily Jenkins Greer - Blue Ridge Girls ()
8. Miriam Arce - Greenwood Girls (So.)

115 lbs.

1. Cienna Heiselman - Byrnes Girls (Sr., 2025 115 2nd, 2024 115 SQ)
2. Jenger Rhodes - Rock Hill Girls (So., 2025 115 4th)
3. Alanise Ricardo - Greenwood Girls (Sr., 2024 125 2nd)
4. Chloe Osteen - Boiling Springs Girls (Sr., 2025 110 SQ, 2024 105 3rd, 2023 Upper 106 3rd)
5. Shana Gentle - Crescent Girls ()
6. Emma Lunsford - Midland Valley Girls (Sr., 2025 115 SQ)
7. Kymarielle Cleveland - Manning Girls (Sr., 2025 110 SQ)
8. Hayden Hall - ALA Lexington Girls (Fr.)

120 lbs.

1. Rachel Hayes - Woodruff Girls (Sr., 2025 120 4th, 2024 105 4th)
2. Reagan Beard - Rock Hill Girls (Fr.)
3. Brylee Osteen - Boiling Springs Girls (So., 2025 120 SQ)
4. Kinley Harris - Northwestern Girls (Jr.)
5. Brynna Keys - West Florence Girls ()
6. Yongshan Tie - Ashley Ridge Girls (So., 2025 120 SQ)
7. Sophia Ricardo - Greenwood Girls (So., 2025 125 4th)
8. Lael Morton-Wheeler - Goose Creek Girls (Sr., 2025 115 3rd)

125 lbs.

1. Vivian Urriola - May River Girls (Jr., 2024 125 4th)
2. Bella Johnson - Boiling Springs Girls (Jr., 2025 105 SQ, 2024 100 SQ)
3. Audrey Naughton - Rock Hill Girls ()
4. Ariel Daniels - South Florence Girls (Jr., 2025 120 2nd)
5. Nyla Charriez - River Bluff Girls ()
6. Guadalupe Jose - Greenwood Girls (So., 2025 130 SQ)
7. Finley Thielemier - May River Girls (Jr., 2025 125 SQ)
8. Abigail Phillips - White Knoll Girls ()

130 lbs.

1. Jourdyn Moorty - Hilton Head Girls (Jr., 2025 130 3rd)
2. Legend Pender - Catawba Ridge Girls ()
3. Anna Hannon - Gaffney Girls (Sr., 2025 120 3rd, 2024 120 3rd, 2023 113 4th)
4. Tylar Smith - Woodruff Girls (So., 2025 125 2nd)
5. Hayden Moore - Swansea Girls (Sr., 2025 125 SQ, 2024 125 SQ, 2023 120 4th)
6. Tatiahna Thomas - Rock Hill Girls ()
7. Gracie Beaulieu - River Bluff Girls (Jr., 2025 130 SQ)
8. Ariea Adcox - Greer Girls (Jr.)

135 lbs.

1. MiHeaven Evans - Chester Girls (Jr., 2025 140 2nd, 2024 125 SQ)
2. Sophia Voudouris - River Bluff Girls (Jr., 2025 135 2nd, 2024 135 SQ)
3. Zoe Osman - West Florence Girls (Sr., 2025 140 SQ)
4. McKenna Pertell - High Point Academy Girls ()
5. Maeve Murphy Booth - Catawba Ridge Girls ()
6. Sinai Odukogbe - Blythewood Girls (Fr.)
7. Julieta De La Cruz - Chesnee Girls (Fr.)
8. Karmen Kemp - Mauldin Girls (Fr.)

140 lbs.

1. Malia Hart - Greenwood Girls (Jr., 2025 140 3rd)
2. Valeria De La Cruz - Chesnee Girls (Jr.)
3. Addison Martin - Dixie Girls (Jr., 2025 130 SQ)
4. Catharine Cook - Fort Mill Girls ()
5. Tori Segarra - Byrnes Girls (So.)
6. Olivia Marcotsis - Indian Land Girls ()
7. Grace Jumper - Chapin Girls (Sr., 2025 135 4th, 2024 135 SQ)
8. Kami Burba - Blythewood Girls (Jr.)

145 lbs.

1. Serenity State - Gaffney Girls (Sr., 2025 140 1st, 2024 135 2nd)
2. Bianca Connell - Mauldin Girls (Sr., 2025 155 1st, 2024 155 1st, 2023 152 1st)
3. Alyssa Reynolds - Wando Girls (Sr., 2025 135 SQ)
4. Amy Robinson - River Bluff Girls (Sr., 2025 145 3rd)
5. Givyn Dyer - Airport Girls (Sr., 2025 145 SQ, 2024 145 3rd)
6. Katelynn Blythe - South Pointe Girls (Sr.)
7. Alison Souvoravong - Philip Simmons Girls ()
8. Aliz Lemos - Spring Valley Girls ()

155 lbs.

1. Alyciah Thomas - Rock Hill Girls (Sr., 2025 155 2nd, 2024 155 2nd)
2. Makayla Hinche - Hilton Head Girls (So., 2025 155 3rd)
3. Stella Glenn - Union County Girls (Jr., 2025 145 2nd, 2024 140 2nd)
4. JaLeah Rice - Byrnes Girls ()
5. Logan Wall - Boiling Springs Girls (Sr., 2025 145 SQ, 2024 145 SQ)
6. Audra Petroff - Blythewood Girls (Sr., 2025 155 4th)
7. Zey McKie - ALA Lexington Girls (Sr.)
8. Natalee Austin - Indian Land Girls ()

170 lbs.

1. Rory Travis - Gilbert Girls (Sr., 2025 155 SQ, 2024 145 2nd, 2023 145 2nd)
2. Maliah Patton - Military Magnet Girls (So., 2025 170 SQ)
3. Kyrra Shipman-Lutz - River Bluff Girls (Jr., 2025 155 SQ)
4. Daniella Taylor - Cane Bay Girls ()
5. Kennedy Heyward - Blythewood Girls (So.)
6. Shamaria Wardlaw - Crescent Girls ()
7. Aviana Patterson - Greenville Girls (Sr.)
8. Julianna Haas - Rock Hill Girls ()

190 lbs.

1. Makayla Vasser - Union County Girls (Jr., 2025 190 1st, 2024 170 2nd - Nebraska Class A)
2. Heaven Whatley - Greenwood Girls (So., 2025 190 SQ)
3. Luna Vaughn - Mauldin Girls ()
4. Leyhomis Garcia-Orta - Dorman Girls (Jr.)
5. Shamya Digsby-Williams - South Pointe Girls (Jr.)
6. Azalea Hinton - Chester Girls (Sr., 2025 190 3rd, 2024 190 SQ)
7. Natalia Clyburn - Lancaster Girls (Sr., 2025 190 SQ, 2024 235 3rd)
8. Payton Souder - Goose Creek Girls (Sr., 2025 190 SQ, 2024 190 SQ)

235 lbs.

1. Aislynn Castillo - Greenwood Girls (So., 2025 235 2nd)
2. Aniya Ruiz - Swansea Girls (Jr., 2025 235 1st)
3. Sarah Hodge - Chester Girls (Jr., 2025 235 3rd, 2024 235 4th)
4. Bella Williams - Rock Hill Girls ()
5. Makayla Alvarado - Northwestern Girls ()
6. Maggie Capps - River Bluff Girls ()
7. Elli Busby - Crescent Girls ()
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 AAAA 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 AAA 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



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:

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

SCBCA AA Top Seniors

Kylie Fortner, Landrum
Zimarika Moorer, Lake Marion
Micah Davis, Atlantic Collegiate
Zion Prioleau, Timberland
Mylajya 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

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

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,



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.

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

AA Basketball Polls

1. Cathedral
2. Cross Schools
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. 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 150 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 Gjoklaj - 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 Muckelvane - Pinewood Prep (Jr.)

SCISA

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

Clarendon Hall softball "seeking new formula"

By Dennis Brunson

hsr.com Associate Editor

Summerton – For the past five years or so, Jeffrey Bays has been liked a tenured scientist of softball. He had concocted a winning formula – Skylar Dymond at catcher, Calli Yount as the pitcher, Mandy Wells at shortstop and Maggie Harrington in centerfield – that helped Clarendon Hall to five consecutive SCISA state championship series appearances that led to the championship trophy being brought home three times.

That quartet, along with corner outfielders Ashlee Berry and Ava Cribb, all graduated. That means Bays is going to have to be more of a mad scientist this year, trying to find the right balance for another winning formula.

"I mean we've been talking a little bit about it," said Bays, whose team opens its season on February 24 at Lakewood High School. "We've got ideas of what we would like to see, but we're not ready to put out there what that might be. It's just going to be a matter of what we're going to try to execute. In the early going especially, we're going to be moving people around a lot and see how they handle it."

Clarendon Hall had its run of consecutive state championships end at three after losing to Pee Dee Academy for the AAA crown last season. The Saints were trying to win a crown in a third different classification. They won the Class A title in 2022 and the AA crown in both 2023 and 2024.

Clarendon Hall returns six players from last season's squad in sophomore Brynli Brewer, eighth-grader Sunshine Brown, freshman AC Martens, sophomore Aubree Richardson, senior Kelsie Martin and sophomore AJ Clark.

Brewer was an All-Region 1 selection last year as the Saints' third baseman. She batted .353 in 77 plate appearances, finishing with five doubles, one triple,

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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 Kloe 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.

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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 AAA 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

1. James Island
2. Clover
3. Stratford
4. Summerville
5. Carolina Forest
6. Ashley Ridge
7. Byrnes
8. Rock Hill
9. Blythewood
10. Fort Dorchester
11. Boiling Springs
12. Dorman
13. Mauldin
14. Lexington
15. Wando
16. River Bluff
17. Cane Bay
18. Spartanburg
19. Wade Hampton
20. Dutch Fork

5A Division 2

1. Fort Mill
2. Lugoff-Elgin
3. Eastside
4. St. James
5. Greenwood
6. Catawba Ridge
7. Hillcrest
8. TL Hanna
9. Chapin
10. Nation Ford
11. Woodmont
12. Indian Land
13. Gaffney
14. White Knoll
15. Lucy Beckham
16. Northwestern
17. Goose Creek
18. Berkeley
19. Socastee
20. Myrtle Beach

AAAA

1. Travelers Rest
2. May River
3. South Pointe
4. Fountain Inn
5. Daniel
6. Westside
7. Laurens
8. Aiken
9. Hartsville
10. North Augusta
11. York
12. Greer
13. Bluffton
14. Hilton Head
15. Beaufort
16. Dreher
17. Gilbert
18. AC Flora
19. South Aiken
20. Darlington

AAA

1. West-Oak
2. Palmetto
3. Aynor
4. Powdersville
5. Broome
6. Belton-Honea Path
7. Union County
8. Crescent
9. Woodruff
10. Battery Creek
11. Waccamaw
12. Hanahan
13. Swansea
14. Loris
15. Walhalla
16. Marlboro County
17. Chapman
18. Christ Church
19. Keenan
20. Pendleton

AA-A

1. Chester
2. Chesnee
3. Liberty
4. Ninety-Six
5. Clinton
6. Buford
7. Dixie
8. Bamberg-Ehrhardt
9. Edisto
10. High Point Academy
11. Pelion
12. Marion
13. Timberland
14. Cheraw
15. Bridges Prep
16. Military Magnet
17. Philip Simmons
18. Academic Magnet
19. ALA-Lexington
20. Carvers Bay

GIRLS

1. Rock Hill
2. Greenwood
3. River Bluff
4. Blythewood
5. Chester
6. Northwestern
7. Chesnee
8. Boiling Springs
9. Byrnes
10. White Knoll
11. South Florence
12. Crescent
13. Cane Bay
14. Gilbert
15. Sumter
16. South Pointe
17. Wando
18. Hilton Head
19. Marlboro County
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

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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 AAAA 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 changing 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 **Jamonic 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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Proudly Saluting Chip Ravenell #0 #HHES Lifer

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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 Giswhite** also represented the team at the state meet finishing 30 and 35, respectively.

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

In the state title game, Heathwood Hall started



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SCMat.com Wrestling Rankings (Individual)

AAAAA

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)

113 lbs.

1. Jake Strickland - Hillcrest (So., 2025 106 1st)
2. Beckham Boggess - Clover (Jr., 2025 106 4th)
3. Morrison Murphy - Fort Mill (So.)

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)

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 Vaporis - River Bluff (Sr., 2025 120 SQ, 2024 106 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 - Bolling Springs (Sr., 2025 132 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)

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)

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)

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)

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)

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)

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)

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)

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)

AAA

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)

113 lbs.

1. Eddy Yambao - Hanahan (Sr., 2025 120 SQ)
2. Cayden Duncan - Palmetto (Sr.)
3. Dylan Bray - Powdersville (Jr., 2025 106 SQ)

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)

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)

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)

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)

DILLON HIGH SCHOOL

Second-ranked Dillon girls focused on state title

By Billy G. Baker
Publisher

Dillon—After competing for the SCHSL AAA girls' basketball championship last season, the current 2025-26 Dillon girls' basketball team is ranked number two in the current HSSR ranking, one spot behind top ranked **Walhalla**, who beat them in the finals last season.

As of Jan. 15, the Lady Wildcats are 13-2, 2-0 and they are focused on a second straight state title run.

"I have been impressed with the team's willingness to focus on playing team basketball and playing well as a team has been our focus all season," said head coach **James McMillian**, starting his 10th season as the head coach in the Lady Wildcat program. "At the start of the new year we have been focused on finding ways to get more players involved in our offense so defenses will have to stop focusing on just our top two players."

"I think this team is a contender once again, but we have to keep working on all the little things and find ways to get more players involved in our offense," said Coach McMillian. "We learned a lot last year in coming from behind to beat Oceanside Collegiate to win lower state and then we loved what we need to improve upon in the loss to Walhalla in the state finals."

This year's team is once again led by next level sophomore shooting guard prospect **Treasure Davis** who is starting for the fourth straight season. Davis is currently leading the team in scoring (22.5 points and 5.9 steals a game) while also averaging 5.1 rebounds and 3.2 steals a game.

"Treasure makes a lot of plays on the court a lot of other players simply can't make," said Coach McMillian. "Just about every game she has one of those 'Oh My Gosh Plays' that makes you wonder where she developed such creativity on a basketball court."

"She has lost some weight since last season and that has made her quicker on the court," said Coach McMillian. "Her shot has improved a lot over last season also. She is going to be an outstanding next level player once she finishes her career at Dillon."

Not many teams in Class AAA pack a one-two punch of Davis and junior point guard **Khw-Nyla McKinnon**. McKinnon, a three-year starter, is currently averaging 18.1 points a game including 5.5 rebounds, 5.7 steals and 4.2 assists a game.

"McKinnon used to score mainly by attacking the basket, but she has developed an outside shot this

Dillon boys hoops focused on strong region finish

By Billy G. Baker
Publisher

Dillon—Not many high school head basketball coaches in South Carolina can state that they are proud to be coaching, 50 years later, at the very same school they graduated from in 1977, but such is the accomplishment of Dillon head boys coach **Bryan Grice**.

Grice, now a young 67, was a key player on several Dillon High basketball teams before he graduated in 1976. He went on to star at **South Carolina State University** where he

earned all-conference honors with the Bulldogs after his senior season.

As of January 15, Dillon is 9-5, 1-1 as they prepare to play 8 straight region games to conclude the regular season.

"It is hard to imagine that 50 years ago I was a player on the Dillon High team, and now I feel blessed and honored to be the head coach at my alma mater, 50 years later," said Coach Grice. "It has been quite a journey."

Coach Grice said the team's participation in holiday tournaments hosted by **Purnell Swett** **Dillon**, page 70

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2025-26 Marlboro County Lady Bulldogs basketball

Girls wrestling program continues growth at MCHS

By David Shelton
Senior Writer

Bennettsville – Female high school wrestling is a growing sport in the Palmetto State and **Marlboro County**'s girls program is among those that continue to see increased numbers.

Marlboro County has had solid success at producing individuals who compete for state championships in their weight class. As the team adds wrestlers to the roster and individuals continue to improve, the team has increased their ability to compete in team success.

The program recently held its own tournament,

Rep. Jackie E. Hayes
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the Lady Bulldog Brawl and several Marlboro County wrestlers placed in the top three in their respective weight classes.

One of the team's top candidates for an individual state championship is **Gabby Murrillo**, who is ranked fifth in the state in the 105-pound weight class. She won the top spot in the tournament.

Cassidy Dease finished third at 112 pounds and **Graycen Duncan** was third at 117 pounds. **Zinnia Jones** placed third at 122 pounds while **Haylee Duncan** was second at 127 pounds.

Jaylynn Peterkin finished third at 137 pounds

See Marlboro County, pg. 70

A Friend of the
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Marlboro County
Athletics!



Hartsville wrestlers gearing up for postseason

By David Shelton
Senior Writer

Hartsville – The sport of wrestling is thriving at Hartsville High and the 2025-26 team has high expectations.

As of mid-January, Hartsville was ranked No. 9 in Class AAAA by scmat.com. The Red Foxes were ranked third among Lower State teams and the look to battle for the Lower State title in February.

Several individual wrestlers are ranked among the best in the state in their respective weight classes as well. Freshman **Noah Lynch** is ranked No. 1 in the AAAA 132-pound weight class while sophomore **Mikale Lynch** is ranked No. 3 at 138 pounds. He finished third in the state individual tournament at 126 last season.

Jared Wilson is ranked sixth at 150 pounds and **Deuce Jeffords** is ranked eighth at 285 pounds. **Elijah Wilson**, a two-time state qualifier, is ranked third at 165 pounds.

The Red Foxes have competed well against

tough schedule this winter. They finished as the runner-up in the Knights Open at Stratford High earlier this season. In that tournament, Noah Lynch won the 132 title and **Izayah Hubbard** won the 106 pound title. **Lamont Hargraves** was third at 120 pounds.

Will Manah was fourth at 173 and **Kaedon Bate-man** was second at 190 pounds.

Maurice Perez finished fourth at 215 pounds and Jeffords placed third at 285.

Other competing wrestlers this season include **John Truett** (113), **Cameron McNeil** (120), **Garrin Wilson** (138) and **Mason Saleby** (144).

Basketball Update

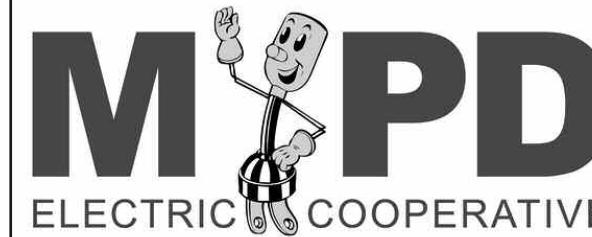
The basketball teams at Hartsville have reached

See Hartsville, pg. 70

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Bears boys hope to continue last year's success

By Dennis Brunson
hssr.com Associate Editor

Honea Path – The Belton-Honea Path High School boys basketball team is trying to build off of a strong 2024-25 campaign. The Bears went 16-11 overall last season and won the Region 1-AAA championship with a 7-1 record. They also advanced to the quarterfinals of the state playoffs.

BHP is off to a good start this season but, of course, it all remains to be seen.

"In order for the Bears to repeat that success we are going to have to improve defensively as the season wears on," said Belton-Honea Path head coach Russ

See BHP, pg. 68



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 months the Griffins will be 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 Moffit** 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 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 **Blackburg**.

“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 is assisted by **Chris Cornier**, **Andrew Vaughn**, 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.

Spartanburg Day basketball teams focused on making playoffs

Billy G. Baker

Publisher

Spartanburg—As of mid-January, both the **Spartanburg Day** girl’s and boy’s 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 girl’s 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.

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

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.

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

Ceasar says the addition of King and fellow senior **Bryce King** (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**.

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

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

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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Green Sea Floyds (Jan. 20), Hemingway (Jan. 23), Latta (Jan. 27), Carver’s Bay

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.”

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 playoffs, 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**.

LAKE CITY BOYS OPEN 5-10

The Lake City boys won just five of their first 15 games and opened 1-5 in region play. Panthers head coach **Seneca Barron** is not surprised with the issues.

“The team is going through a rebuilding phase and is still developing chemistry,” Barron said. “Inconsistency on both ends of the floor has made it difficult to close out games. They’ve shown flashes of potential, but execution has been a challenge.”

“Despite the losses, the team continues to compete and gain valuable experience. This season is about growth, learning and laying the foundation for future success. The effort is there; results will follow with time and adjustments.”

Senior **Amari Hanna** is the team’s leading scorer at 13.7 points. He is also averaging 2.5 rebounds, 2.5 assists and 1.8 steals.

Senior Da’jon McClary leads in rebounds at 6.9 while scoring at a 5.5 clip. Senior **Jeffery Burgess** is the second leading scorer at 8.8 and is tied with Hanna for the steals lead.

XyKenan Hickson is leading in assists with a 3.6 average while scoring 6.2 points a game. Senior **Shayon Shavers** is grabbing five boards a game while averaging 2.8 points and senior **Ka’jon McClary** is averaging 4.4 rebounds, 1.4 steals and 2.8 points.

Others who are seeing regular time in the rotation

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are junior Anthony White, junior Jordan Dobson, freshman Zyrie McFadden, junior Jaylen Tooney, junior Alexander Rendo and junior David Singleton.

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 scoring 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

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**Williamsburg Academy
STALLIONS**

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 Caraway, 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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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 9-3-1. Their goal of winning the region championship is still in reach with six region contests left including a rematch with Hardeeville at 10-2.

“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 region 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.

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 Maliah Moody and Kanya Jones also see significant minutes and are

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.

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part of the suffocating defense played by the Lady Vikings in familiar spot, atop region standings

See Denmark-Olar, pg. 33



Stevenson brothers leading Manning boys team

By Dennis Brunson
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 Marion. 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 return four starters from last year's lineup in junior Taniya Johnson, junior Asya Moore, senior Tamia Watson and freshman Amerah 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,



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 Kymarielle 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.

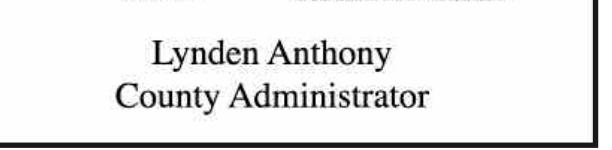
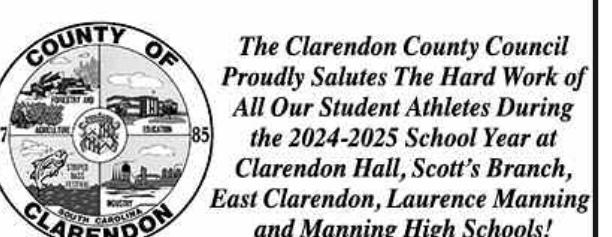
"We have a really tough group of wrestlers," Schneider said. "This is a group of wrestlers to keep eyes on. We are going to miss Kymarielle when she graduates in the spring. Everyone else will be returning next year, and we have experienced wrestlers coming up from the middle school level."

"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."

Lynden Anthony County Administrator



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.

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

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

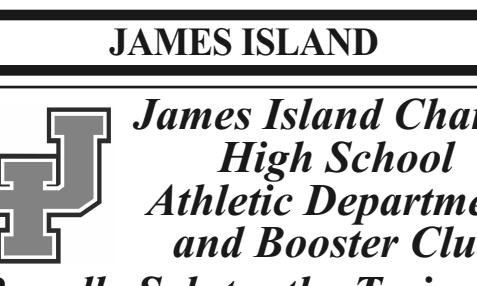
The girls basketball team struggled in the early portion of their season, losing their first seven games, including three losses by three points or less. Things began to turn around towards the end of December and into January as the team has opened region play at 1-1. The overall record entering play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

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

PORTER GAUD



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 newcomer 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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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 rebounds 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

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 think 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 **Kingtree**, **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.”

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

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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 (ZJ) 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 Daryl Tucker. "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 lettermen who have been a big part of the program and are being leaned on to set the tone. Ciara Grant and Telissa 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 Tyrell 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

See Summerville, pg. 41

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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

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.

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'Asia 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.

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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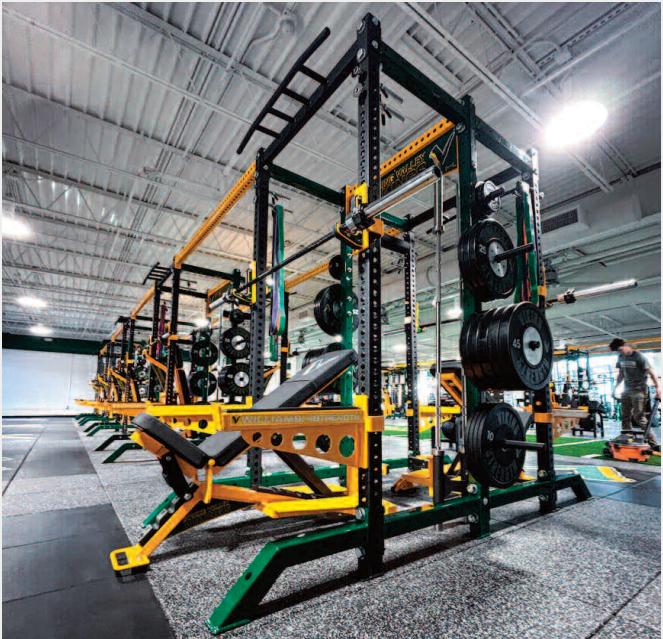
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Things looking up for Fort Dorchester basketball

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 **Ondre Haynes** are experienced and taking on leadership roles. The Patriots are also leaning heavily on senior forwards **Ty'Quz Jenkins** and **Peter Burton** as well as senior guard **Myles Brunson** and junior guard **Juan Concepcion**.

Other members of the team include juniors **Jaylen Porter**, **Dominic Brown**, **Ryan Simmons** and **Linster "Bear" Burgess**.

"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



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

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-AAAAA.

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 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.

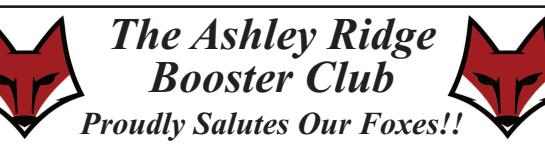
Junior point guard **Javion Gathers**, junior guard **Shayne Pinckney** and senior shooter **Ben Duncan** are also returning starters. Others back from last year's squad are seniors **AJ Ward**, **Evan Terry** and **Javari Walker** and juniors **Jhi Gibbs**, **Nate McKee**, **Maurquis Lee**, **Grant 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

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."

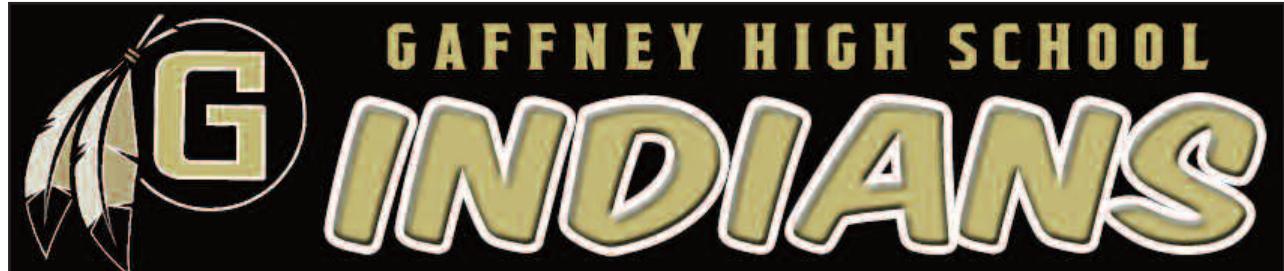
Everett leads the team in scoring this season, averaging 21.3 points per game. Pinckney and Gathers both average more than 10 points per game. Gathers leads in assists with 3.6 per game. Pinckney (2.5) and Everett (2.2) follow in the category.

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 **Pineview, 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.

"We've played good during stretches, but we



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 AAAA 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**, (5-11, 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 Lopez**.

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

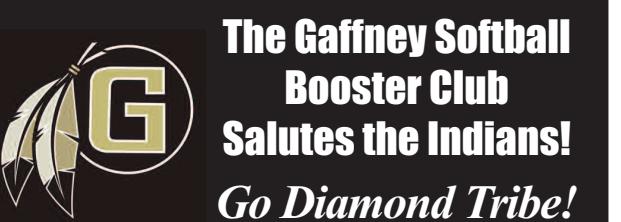
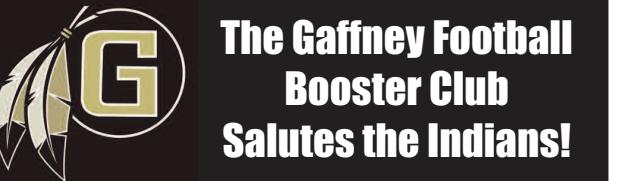
The team's four wins this season have come over **Eastside** (69-53), **Wade Hampton** (64-56), **Atlantic Collegiate Academy** (73-58), and **Powdersville** (60-58).

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**.



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See Gaffney, pg. 31

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-Gaffney-6-0-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. Jaidea Johnson-Byrnes-C
17. Kaileen 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. Teonna 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. Kaniyah Christian-BHP-9th-PG
35. Micah Davis-Atlantic Collegiate
36. Devyn Burgrss-West Oak
37. Cameron Oliver-Greenwood- 5-5- SG
38. Joanna Burgee-West Oak
39. Zion Prioleau-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. Kaileen Parks-North-PG
48. Kailya Herman-Latta
49. Maddy Pojani-First Baptist-5-9-PG
50. Braelin Cumbee-Daniel-SG

HSSR 2029 Girl's Players To Watch

1. Ashlyn Evans-Byrnes-5-9 PG
2. Tiana Marshall-Westside-5-10-G/F-8th
3. Treasure Davis-Dillon-SG—5-6
3. Kaleigh Lucas-South Pointe-5-5-CG-
4. Araina Ross-Sumter-SF
5. Campbell Childers-Northside Vchristian-G-8th
6. Logan Murray-Wilson-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 2026 Top Boy's Prospects

1. Levi Ball-Gray Collegiate-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

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

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February 1: 10:00 AM - 3:00 PM

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*."



Kate Gasque

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

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

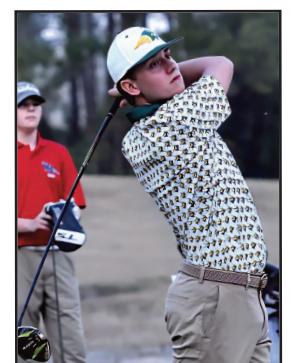
Honoring Latta's Heath Mew

Heath — 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 online 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*."



Heath Mew

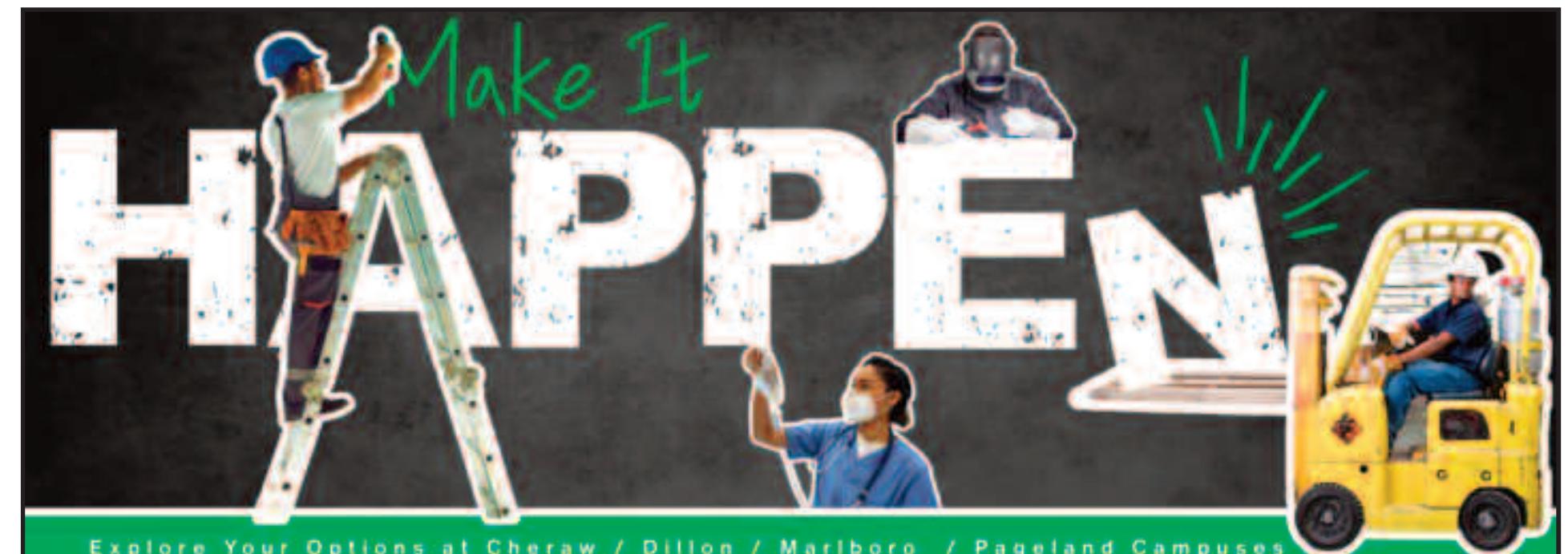
rectors at high schools in the counties of Dillon, Marlboro, and Chesterfield, where NETC serves the needs of high school students seeking to earn dual credits in various subjects that can be transferred to colleges after a student's high school graduation.

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



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LAURENCE MANNING ACADEMY SWAMPCATS

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 contests 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, rebounding 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 varsity basketball, and that shows in how we handle different 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 Collegiate**. 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 consistent," 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 Prickelmyer 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.

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Camden girls, boys hoops teams start strong

By Dennis Brunson
hssr.com Associate Editor

Camden – The Camden High School girls basketball team won its first 12 games of the season before 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.

"I feel like the only thing that can stop us is us."

"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 inside this year in 6-foot-1-inch center **Ayona Alexander**.

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-grader 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 chemistry, 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 because we're in region play. We're trying to accomplish some 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 steals. Junior Tyriek Jones is averaging 12.5 points.

Jayden has shown 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

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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 bench are senior sixth man Jay Cook, junior Hayden Williams, 6-4 junior Will Haunert and 6-5 junior Ethan Spitzer. Cook is averaging 6.4 points, Haunert 2.8 points, 3.3 rebounds and 1.0 blocks, Spitzer 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 deepest 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



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, chemistry, 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, unless our seniors can provide the leadership that is needed for early season success. If we can come together 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 championship. They entered the season on a 16-game region 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 region 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 possible 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

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

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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 **Elijah Oler** (12.5 pts), and senior F **Drew Wolfe** (7.1 pts).

Florence Area Feature Page

Leonard leading the way for Wilson basketball

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-AAAAA. "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 **Zoey 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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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 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."

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

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 **Elijah Oler** (12.5 pts), and senior F **Drew Wolfe** (7.1 pts).

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 **Elijah Oler** (12.5 pts), and senior F **Drew Wolfe** (7.1 pts).

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 Preston Schurknight 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."

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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 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."

"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

THE HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS REPORT

January 30, 2026

Page 25

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 loses 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 Drollet, 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.

"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



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 **Chaquean 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."

Boone goes deep into the bench, which helps his

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Courtesy Matthew Bradberry, Athletic Director

Cross High School

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Cross High School

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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.

THE HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS REPORT

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 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 layups. 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

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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,

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 **Marylin 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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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

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 bettering 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 game.

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 cross-town 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

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Courtesy of Goose Creek High Faculty & Staff



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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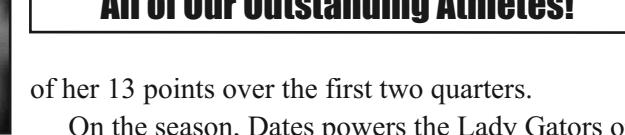
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Courtesy of Goose Creek High Faculty & Staff



“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.”

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.

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, Stans 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 Krysztalowych 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.

Krysztalowych 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 Riley 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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2025-26 Dorchester Academy Raiders girls basketball

Dorchester girls open up '25-26 with 15-2 record

By Dennis Brunson
hssr.com Associate Editor

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 Weatherers 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 Weatherers 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,

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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 Varnadoe, 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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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

WOODLAND HIGH SCHOOL WOLVERINES

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 starting 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 ball 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



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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 **Samuel 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 **Phillip 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 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

ANDREW JACKSON ACADEMY WARRIORS

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 Carrigan** (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-

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 Trinity** 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."

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-

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.

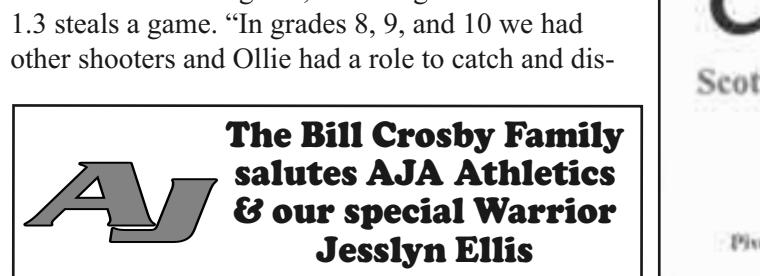
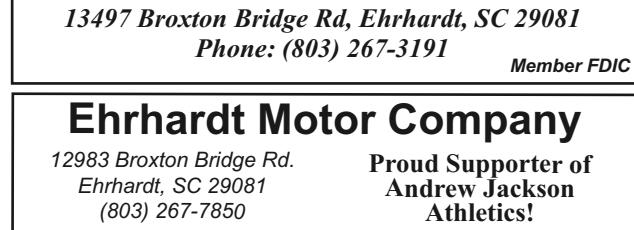
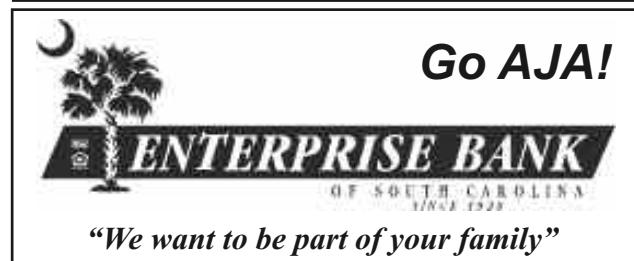
"Hall missing games with an injury set us back a lot because he is a solid on ball defender, rebounds very well, and drives well to the basket along with being an excellent passer," said Coach Barnes. "Getting him back on the floor has made us a better basketball team."

When Sease was out, 6-4 junior PF **Elizuh Davis** stepped 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 inexperienced 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 **Joshua 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 AAAA school, one AAAA 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 **Shetrae Bethea** was the leading rebounder at 7.3 to go with a 6.8 scoring average.

BRIAN HENNECY NO LONGER FOOTBALL COACH

Brian Henney 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 Henney'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.

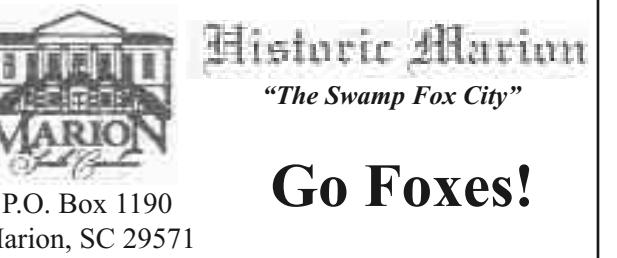
White said he had no real anticipation one way or the other on what the season might hold.

"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-

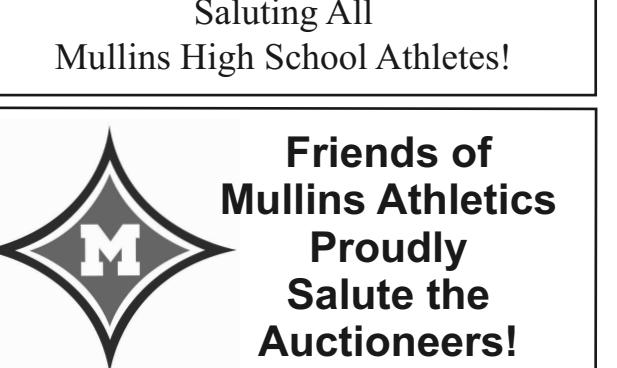
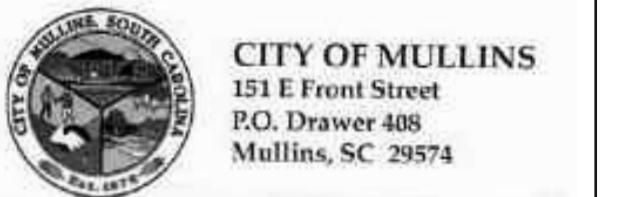
MARION



Go Foxes!



MULLINS



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 AAAA 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**,

has already doubled last season's win total posting 12-7 overall record and 2-1 in region play heading into the Jan. 20 game against Bishop England. Several underclassmen are contributing 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 averages 4.3 rebounds per game. One of three seniors, **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 game.

The other juniors on the roster are **Lalia Yates**, **Destiny McMillian**, and **Jah'Nyiah White**. The sophomores are **Kashanti Glover**, **Shaneyshia Kelly**, and **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. Colleton County has two wrestlers returning that were state qualifiers as individuals last season. **Preston Hogan** qualified in the 106-pound weight class and **Jordan LaPresta** qualified at 132 pounds.

Colleton County is also looking for a head football coach this winter. Adam Kinloch will not return in 2026 after three seasons as head coach. A new coach should be in place by the end of February.

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 **Tyler Reisnor**. The remaining sophomores are **Alex Fargnoli**, **Tre'veon 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.

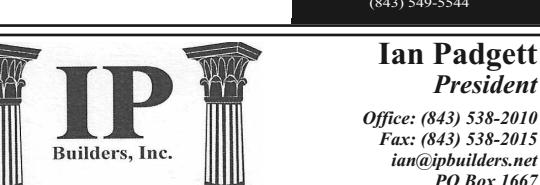
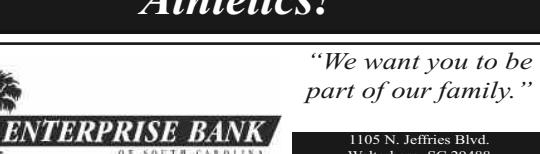
The remaining schedule has two games against Faith Christian, two games against Hilton Head Prep, and single games against Dorchester Academy, St. John's Christian and two games against Patrick Henry.

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.



Gray boys hoops dominate Keenan at MLK Bash

By WORTHY EVANS
Special to the HSSR

Columbia - The Gray Collegiate boys basketball 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



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

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

GRAY COLLEGIATE



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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 Touchstone 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



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.

"If we win out the rest of the way, we would Doran 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.

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 **Makaylee Otey**, junior forward **Naquasha Garrison**, sophomore center **Azioria 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 **AAAA 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 **Scoot Colyer**. Holloman, who transferred from **McBee**, is the sec-

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.

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**

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 (AAAAA) **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 Seegars**.

Sowell, the daughter of the boys head coach, is the leading scorer at 7.9. Quick is averaging 4.7, Seegars 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."

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 **Homarius 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**.

Other wrestlers that are seeing extensive mat time include **Jackson Hudstate** (106), **Tristan Queener** (126), **Anthony Tatro** (132), **Sam**

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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 **Jakiyya Myers**, junior wing **Ania Etheredge**, sophomore shooting guard **Taraji Etheredge** and freshman power forward **Ashlyn 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

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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-State 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 **Jamiyas Myers** or his performance.

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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

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.

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,

was special. Even better, I addressed the ball for the tee shot and it was the best drive I ever hit at that point."

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."

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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 inexperienced 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 **Joshua 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 AAAA school, one AAAA 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 **Shetrae Bethea** was the leading rebounder at 7.3 to go with a 6.8 scoring average.

BRIAN HENNECY NO LONGER FOOTBALL COACH

Brian Henney 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 Henney's first season in 2021, 8-3 in 2022 and 10-2 in 2023.

Hennecy had a 27-25 record.

record the three previous seasons, said his team simply needs to stay the course.

"Closing out close games and minimizing mental mistakes will put us in position to win region," he said. "We just have to keep winning, that's all, that's it. Keep winning."

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.

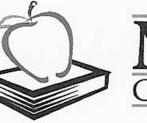
The Auctioneers have three returning starters from last season's 7-9 team that reached the state playoffs. Two of them are sophomore guards **NaRiyah Woodberry** and **Breanna Ford**. Wood-

MARION

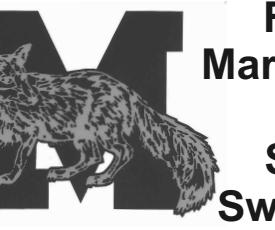
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See Mullins, pg. 68

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 early on as the team has only three seniors on the roster.

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**,

has already doubled last season's win total posting 12-7 overall record and 2-1 in region play heading into the Jan. 20 game against Bishop England. Several underclassmen are contributing 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 averages 4.3 rebounds per game. One of three seniors, **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 game.

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. Colleton County has two wrestlers returning that were state qualifiers as individuals last season. **Preston Hogan** qualified in the 106-pound weight class and **Jordan LaPresta** qualified at 132 pounds.

Colleton County is also looking for a head football coach this winter. Adam Kinloch will not return in 2026 after three seasons as head coach. A new coach should be in place by the end of February.

Colleton Prep hoops looking to finish strong

BY David Shelton
Senior Writer

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.

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 **Tyler 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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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 AAAA 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’nya 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**.

The goal over the course of the season is a simple one.

“We just want to continue building confidence



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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-

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).

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BOYS BASKETBALL STARTS 9-9

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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.

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

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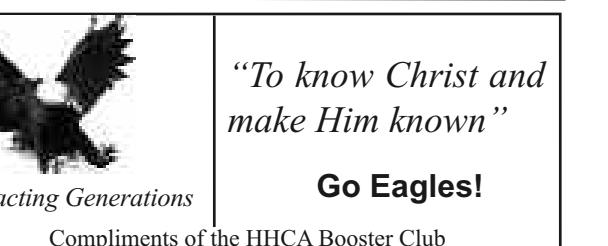


Yusif Yeldiz is leading the team in scoring at 14.5 points per game while dishing 4.7 assists. Sophomore **Sammy Middleton** contributes 10.3 points and 5.3 boards per game. Freshman **Ty Eanes** is scoring 10.2 points while pulling down nearly four rebounds per game. Junior **Max Diamond** has been 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



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**.

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."

The most consistent starting lineup includes senior **Emma Thompson**, freshman **Emma Reese**, freshman **Lelia Cepak** and freshman **Emma Kate Streb**. Others seeing significant minutes off the

Hannah-Pamlico basketball looks to end strong

By David Shelton

Senior Writer

Pamlico – With less than a month remaining in the regular season, the boys and girls basketball teams at **Hannah-Pamlico 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

First off the bench are senior guard **Tylaysha Ross**, junior guard **ZaMiyah Jones**, freshman guard

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 AAAA team, three games versus AAA teams and a game versus a AAA 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 Lyrer** and **Gerald Connor**.

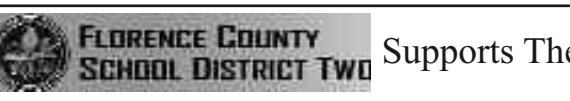
Manning takes over the girls program that finished 1-16 last season. The team has shown improvement and is more competitive overall, winning three of their first 11 games and posting a 1-4 region record. The coach expects improvement as he changes the culture and brings a winning attitude to the team. 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

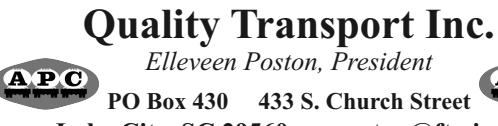
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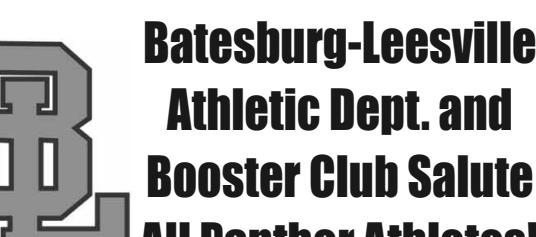
Hannah-Pamlico Raiders!

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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**, **Jadore Shird**, **Jamauria Mcfadden** and **Quan'Teria Eaddy**.

BATESBURG-LEESVILLE



Courtesy
Eric Gambrell, BLHS Assistant Principal



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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**.

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

1. Westwood (16-1, 5-0 Region 5-5A)
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)

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."

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.

Midlands Girls Top Ten

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)

outplayed us."

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**.

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"That's one thing that we've been

See Midlands, pg. 69

Modern Turf Farm Recruiting Feature

HSSR SC 2027-29 Prospects

(Nominate A Player: hsreport@aol.com)

1. Joshua Dobson-Catawba Ridge-DB-6-1,174
2. Jaiden Kelly-Murray-Summerville-WR-5-10,170
3. Jaiden Bryant-Irmo-DE-6-3,245
4. Aiden Manavian-Oceanside Collegiate-QB/SS-6-0,185
5. Jayven Williams-Summerville-RB-5-8,165
6. Trenton Lynch-Spartanburg-RB-5-9,185
7. Chanin Harris-Burnes-WR-6-1,165
8. Franklin Richardson-Sumter-QB-6-2,220
9. Seth Tillman-South Pointe-DL-6-3,260
10. Kendarius "P-nut" Bailey-Gaffney-LB-6-0,215
11. David Seqgara III-Byrnes-RB/FS-5-10,202
12. C. J. Brooks-Gaffney-OL-6-4,320
13. Amare Patterson-Bluffton-WR-6-1,190
14. Israel "Shank" Harris-James Island-OL-6-3,330
15. Michael Strickler-Oceanside Collegiate-FS-6-1,210
16. Christian Chancellor-Daniel-DB-5-9,162-Clemson
17. JaQuan Samuel-Hartselle-OL-6-2,275
18. Kaiden Watkins-Rock Hill-CB-5-10,172
19. Khsistant Jackson-Ridge-View-WR-5-11,180
20. Nate Carson-Irmo-OL-6-4,271
21. Jaden Wuerth-Dutch Fork-DL-6-3,270
22. Maleek Miller-Irmo-WR-5-11,175
23. Dwayne Louallen-Central-QB-6-1,205
24. Simeon Jones-North Augusta-DL-6-1,305
25. Tajee Watson-Martin-BHP-DB-5-10-162
26. Dennis Glenn-Boiling Springs-DT-NG-6-2,290
27. Kelvion Manning-Dillon-DL-6-3,190
28. Jaylon Watson-TL-Hanna-DB
29. Kelyn Durham-Eastside-RB-FS-5-9,180
30. Dai-Shion Watkins-Hynes-Dorman-WR-/FS-6-1,190
31. Jordan Logan-Orangeburg-Wilkinson-SS-6-1,190
32. Aiden Gibson-Woodruff-RB-6-2,200
33. Malik Robinson-South Florence-WR-6-2,190
34. William Geddis-Swansea-MLB-6-0,215
35. JaQuan Samuel-Hartselle-OL-6-2,275
36. Sam Holiday-Fountain Inn-QB-6-0,195
37. Jack Armstrong-Gray Collegiate-OL/DL-6-2,235
38. Josiah Moseley-Wren-RB-5-10,165
39. Marquise Anderson-DL-Emerald-5-10,210
40. Calvin McCoy-Greer-RB-5-10,180
41. Torian Henry-James Island-DL-6-2,210
42. Mari Moody-Demark-Olar-OL-6-4,235
43. Karron Shaw-Gaffney-B-RB-5-10,180
44. Henry Rivers-Berkeley-QB-DB-5-10,170
45. Ayden Montgomery-Gaffney-DB-WR-5-10,162
46. Karamon Glenn-BHP-DT-5-10,240
47. Jerimiah Good-Seneca-OL-6-1,248
48. Johnquis Johnson-South Florence-DB-6-1,180
49. Fredick Cooper-South Florence-FS-5-11,171
50. Dennis Glenn-Boiling Springs-DT-NG-6-3,290
51. Makel Stephens-Loris-RB-5-7,190
52. Bryson Bowers-James Island-LB-6-0,200
53. Caleb Sharo-Ashley Ridge-TE-6-3,215
54. Jeffrey Williams-Atlantic Collegiate-DL-6-4,290
55. Xavier Huggins-Powdersville-WR
56. Xavier Means-Northwestern-QB-6-0,165
57. Micah Adams-Stratford-TE-6-2,265
58. Anthony Williams-Bamberg-Ehrhardt-DB-5-11,175
59. Luke Penland-JL. Mann-OL-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-RB-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 Streeter-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. Khayee 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 AAAA state finals, losing to Dutch Fork both years.

Kelly-Murray has offers from both **Clemson** and **South Carolina** among others.