

# 2025 FOOTBALL PREVIEW

**Ballard Memorial Bombers**  
**Caldwell County Tigers**  
**Calloway County Lakers**  
**Christian County Colonels**  
**Crittenden County Rockets**  
**Fort Campbell Falcons**  
**Fulton County Pilots**  
**Graves County Eagles**  
**Henderson County Colonels**  
**Hopkins County Central Storm**

**Hopkinsville Tigers**  
**Marshall County Marshals**  
**Mayfield Cardinals**  
**McCracken County Mustangs**  
**Murray Tigers**  
**Paducah Tilghman Blue Tornado**  
**Trigg County Wildcats**  
**Union County Braves**  
**Webster County Trojans**

**PLUS:**  
**Fletcher Long’s Kentucky’s High Schools Top Fives**







Coach Brooks Named KFCA District 1 Coach of the Year

**By: Laurna Todd  
KPI Writer**

Tyler Brooks, the head football coach at McCracken County High School, has received the prestigious title of Kentucky Football Coaches Association (KFCA) Class 6A, District 1 Coach of the Year for 2024. This honor recognizes his exceptional leadership, strategic impact, and unwavering dedication to Mustang football.

Coach Brooks has been involved with the McCracken football program since 2020, initially serving as an assistant coach and later as the offensive coordinator under former head coach Jonathan Smith. His promotion to head coach represents a smooth transition for a program that is on the rise, led by someone who intimately understands its culture and players.

A 2012 graduate of Henderson County High School and a 2016 graduate of Georgetown College, Brooks was an accomplished player himself, earning Mid-

South Conference All-Conference honors twice and serving as team captain in 2015. After coaching at Henderson County from 2017 to 2019, he joined McCracken County, quickly establishing himself as a rising star within Kentucky's coaching ranks.

The KFCA award not only honors his successful 2024 campaign but also highlights the positive culture and offensive identity he has fostered within the team. Known for his sharp football intellect, player-first approach, and high-energy leadership style, Brooks is expected to bring a disciplined yet innovative edge to the Mustangs as they head into the 2025 season.

His ability to connect with players, uphold high standards, and creatively utilize their strengths distinguishes him as a coach. Mustang fans can anticipate a program built on accountability, toughness, and excitement under Coach Brooks' guidance. With a solid foundation in place, the future looks bright for the Mustangs in 2025.

Sean Thompson Named Courier Journal Kentucky High School Football Coach of the Year


**By: Laurna Todd  
KPI Writer**

Sean Thompson, head coach of Paducah Tilghman, has been recognized as the Courier Journal Kentucky High School Football Coach of the Year for 2024 following a historic season that has reestablished the Blue Tornado as one of the premier football programs in the state.

Under Coach Thompson's leadership, Tilghman achieved a perfect 15-0 record, marking the school's first undefeated season since 1973. The season culminated in a Class 4A State Championship victory against Franklin County, with a score of 27-20—Tilghman's first state title since 2009. The team showcased its prowess on both sides of the ball, averaging over 49 points per game on offense while the defense held opponents to just 9.1 points per game.

However, Thompson's impact extends far beyond the scoreboard. His ability to foster a culture rooted in accountability, unity, and high

expectations has garnered praise from players, parents, and coaches throughout the state. In a short time, he transformed Tilghman into a disciplined, confident, and resilient team that thrived



under pressure. The Courier Journal panel referred to this as a "culture of excellence" and credited Thompson with elevating Paducah Tilghman to become one of the most dominant teams in Kentucky football. Thompson said, "Winning coach of the year is a

big deal to me because there are so many good coaches in our state that do a phenomenal job. To be considered as one of them is special, but there is still work to be done!"

As a mentor, Thompson's influence is equally significant. He has guided players such as quarterback Jack James and defensive back Martels Carter—both of whom garnered Division I interest—not only toward athletic success but also toward personal growth and leadership. His players credit him with teaching vital life lessons through football: hard work, self-discipline, and a belief in one another.

We asked Coach Thompson his best moment coaching he said, "There isn't a best moment. Though winning a state championship was great, it's more so the many athletes we have been able to get to college with an opportunity to continue their playing careers that I am most proud of. We have just under 25 who have played college football in our 4 years together."

Coaches and Assistant Coaches set visions for their players

**By: Laurna Todd  
KPI Writer**

High school football coaches play a vital role in mentorship, motivation, and friendship, helping young players grow on and off the field in western Kentucky counties.

At Ballard Memorial High School, Head Coach Jon Hedges, promoted in January 2024, emphasizes fundamentals and weightlifting while fostering confidence and

unity among players. In Marshall County, Head Coach Nick Bloodworth focuses on off-season training, creating a fun and competitive atmosphere. Coach Tyler DeBarndini at Graves County emphasizes character development, while Sean Thompson at Paducah Tilghman led the team to a perfect 15-0 record in 2024, winning the state championship and earning Coach of the Year honors.

High school coaches build trust through genuine care, attending school events, and being accessible beyond practice. They support player success through structured training and accountability, promoting resilience, discipline, teamwork, and self-confidence.

Assistant coaches also play a crucial role, working closely with specific positions and providing personalized mentoring. They reinforce team culture and ensure accountability, helping players thrive without getting lost in the team

dynamic. Across western Kentucky programs, assistant coaches run off-season training, lead film sessions, and offer life advice, often being the first to notice when players need help.

While head coaches set the vision, it is the assistant coaches who guide players through improvement, making them essential to every athlete's journey.

Together, the coaching staff collaborates to help each player reach their full potential.





# BALLARD MEMORIAL HIGH SCHOOL

2024 Final Record: 4 wins, 7 losses  
District Record: 1-2



2025 Senior Players: Luke Sullivan, Jalen Smith, Noah Byrd, Jackson Laster, Logan Brown, Trevor Bondurant, Trevor Elliot, Hayden Hector and William Dowdy

**Q. What has the focus been in preparing for this season?**  
A. We hired a new Offensive Coordinator, John Adams. So we have been installing our new offense this summer. We have been in the weight room since January. We've seen tremendous growth in our players.

**Q. Who are some key returning players, and what roles will they play this year?**  
A. Senior Luke Sullivan, Luke played every snap last year on all three phases of the game. He is outstanding young man with great leadership skills. Senior Noah Byrd, I'm excited to see what he can do for us this year with being a Running back this year. Junior, Mayson Crowley is our team leader. Mayson is the hardest worker on the team. He will be our starting quarterback this season.



Coaches Corner  
**Q & A with Jon Hedges**  
*Ballard Memorial Football head coach*

**A.** Our biggest strength this year has been the team dedication to the weight room. Each player has met their summer goal for the weight room.

**Q. What are some of the biggest challenges or tough matchups you see on your schedule this year?**  
A. District opponents

**Q. Do you have any players drawing attention from college programs or who fans should keep an eye on?**

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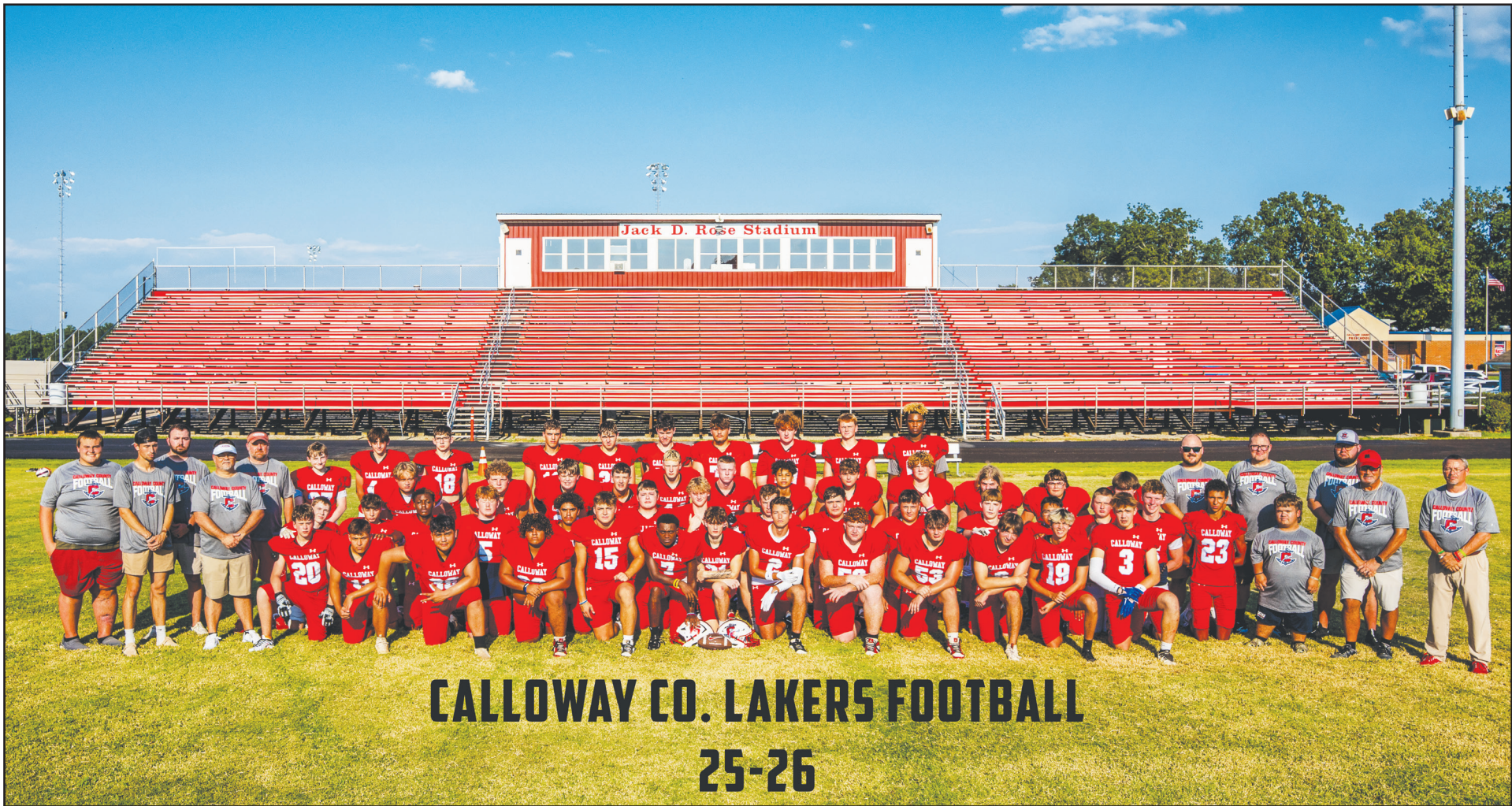




# CALLOWAY CO. HIGH SCHOOL

**2024 Final Record: 0 wins, 10 losses**

**District Record: 0-5**



2025 Senior Players: Ty Lewis, Sinjin Gesler, Jay'Dynn Darcus, John Brear Jr., Ivan Damian Camarena, Logan Smith, Yoni Damian Camarena, Zechariah Gloasow, Sebastian Diaz, Shaun Phillips, Logan McKnight, Caiden Godby and Luis Lira.



### Coaches Corner Q & A with Coby Lewis

*Calloway Co. Football head coach*

**Q. What has the focus been in preparing for this season?**

A. Building through numbers, developing depth. With me being a new coach we have a complete revamp of

the Offense and Defense with new schemes on both sides.

**Q. Who are some key returning players, and what roles will they play**

**this year?**

A. Logan Smith - RB / LB ( 4 year starter), Mathew Briedwell QB, Shaun Phillips WR / DB, Jay'Dynn Darcus WR / DB, Caiden Godby - Center, Luis Lira - OG

Logan McKnight DE and Addition of Ty Lewis WR

**Q. What are some of the biggest strengths or improvements**

**you've seen in your team compared to last year?**

A. We feel really good with our box play. The strength is our offensive and defensive lines.

**Q. Do you have any players drawing attention from college programs or who fans should keep an eye on?**

A. Logan Smith has a few offers already - Bethel and KWC

Others - Mathew Briedwell QB , Keller Aycock OL , Brayden Winchester DE, Marcus Hamilton NG

**Q. What are the biggest challenges or tough matchups you see on your**


**schedule this year?**

A. Overcoming the lack of success in the past.

I am new to the program and we are taking on a new motto BTB Burn the Boats



**TRIGG COUNTY  
WILDCATS**



Date	Opponent	Time	H/A
8/22	Ohio County	6 PM	H
8/29	Hart County	7 PM	H
9/5	Marshall County	7 PM	H
9/12	Hopkinsville	7 PM	H
9/19	at Caldwell County	7 PM	A
9/26	Crittenden County	7 PM	H
10/3	at Fort Campbell	7 PM	A
10/17	Mayfield	7 PM	H
10/24	at Todd County Central	7 PM	A
10/31	at Fulton County	7 PM	A



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# Football highlights

## Caldwell County Tigers

PRINCETON — Caldwell County exited the 2024 high school football season with a 5-7 record. The Tigers reached the second round of the 2024 high school football postseason. Caldwell County defeated Fort Campbell in the opening round of the 2024 KHSAA Class 2A Playoffs. But Mayfield dealt Caldwell County a season-ending loss one week later in a second round matchup. The Tigers compete in Class 2A, District 1. Head coach Aaron McClung guides the Tigers.

Caldwell County is scheduled to visit Hopkins County Central for its opening game in the 2025 high school football season on Friday, Aug. 22.

## Hopkins County Central Storm

MADISONVILLE — Hopkins County Central entered the win column four of 10 times during the 2024 high school football season. The Storm compiled a 4-7 record in 2024. Hopkins County Central suffered a season-ending loss to title contender Hart County in the initial round of the 2024 KHSAA Class 3A

Playoffs. The Storm compete in Class 3A, District 1. Head coach Chris Manning guides the Storm. Hopkins County Central is slated to host Caldwell County for its opening game in the 2025 high school football season on Friday, Aug. 22.

## Todd County Central Rebels

ELKTON — After making appearance in the 2024 KHSAA Class 2A Playoffs, Todd County Central exited last season with a 2-9 record. Perennial state title contender Mayfield defeated Todd County Central in the first

round of the 2024 KHSAA Class 2A Playoffs. The Rebels compete in Class 2A, District 1. Head coach Willem Cohen guides the Rebels. Todd County Central is scheduled to visit Ballard Memorial for its opening game in the 2025 high school football season.

## Trigg County Wildcats

CADIZ — Trigg County won three of seven regular season games in 2024 and missed out on advancing to the KHSAA Class 3A Playoffs. Following

realignment, Trigg County has dropped down one class. The Wildcats compete in Class 2A, District 1. Head coach Chris Ezell guides the Wildcats. Trigg County is scheduled to host Ohio County for its opening game in the 2025 high school football season during the Wildcat Chevrolet Bowl on Friday, Aug. 22.

## Union County Braves

MORGANFIELD — Union County finished as the 2024 KHSAA Class 3A Runner-up and remains a tittle contender.

The Braves are looking to reload for the 2025 high school football season. Christian Academy-Louisville defeated Union County in the 2024 KHSAA Class 3A title game. Following the loss in the KHSAA Class 3A title game, Union County exited the 2024 high school football season 12-3. The Braves compete in Class 3A, District 1. Head coach Derek Johns guides the Braves. Union County is scheduled to host Madisonville-North Hopkins for its opening game in the 2025 high school football season on Friday, Aug. 22.

# High School Preseason Top-Fives

By Fletcher Long  
*Special to Kentucky Publishing*

## 1A

**No. 1, Raceland Rams**  
10-5 in '24, lost by five (5) to Sayre in the title game (27-22)  
This may be the year of the Rams. Coach Salmons club lost in the finals to Sayre in '24 by five points (27-22); lost to Pikeville in the finals in '22 and '23, and to Pikeville again in the semis in '21. Point is, the Rams have been historically knocking on the door. It may be time to knock down the door. The Rams lost superstar defender, Lindon Sammons to graduation. Sammons led the club with 15-TFLs, nine (9) sacks, four (4) FFs, and five (5) FRs. Outside of Sammons, the roster is pretty intact. Jacob Waller will be a junior. Waller threw for 1,500-yards and 11-TDs as a sophomore against four (4) picks and ran for another four (4) scores. Shannon Marushi ('26) returns, as does Landen Stiltner ('27), and Jonah Arnett. The trio gained over 1,500 yards rushing, together in '24, and scored a combined 25-rushing TDs.

Marushi led the team in scoring in '24 with 72 points and Jacob Waller was a reliable conversion on PATs (38) and scored 68-points himself with four (4) TDs rushing, the 38-PATs, and a pair of three pointers (FGs) on four (4) attempts. Arnett led the team with 41-receptions while Bryson Rowsey ('26) and Parker Ison ('26) contributed 51-receptions between them and 5-TDs receiving In addition to offense, Arnett was a top defender. Arnett registered 76-tackles, nine (9) TFLs, a-FR, and three (3) picks. Logan Lockwood hopes to replace Sammons as the Rams top defender in '25. Lockwood is a '26 prospect who had 80-tackles a year ago with eight (8) TFLs, seven (7) sacks, a FF, and a FR. Lockwood is a '26. Lockwood is a stud!

## No. 2 Kentucky Country Day

10-3 in '24, lost in the Semis to Raceland in Louisville  
Every year KCD is in our top five and, seemingly every year, the preseason pronouncement seems warranted before it is all said and done. The

Bearcats have virtually the entire accoutrement returning and the roster will be senior laden when the season opens. If you don't like KCD and enjoy it when they struggle, your year is a year away. For now, you would be wise to avert your eyes in '25 as they will be very good and this won't be a fun year for the Bearcat Hater's Club. Caden Long is back for his senior year and he was a reliable signal caller who was about as dangerous with his feet as he was throwing the football. He is a slick ball handler in that offensive backfield and one of the ball club's better athletes. Parker Rudolph is a '26 kid, like Long, and he gained over a thousand yards a year ago rushing the football and was the team's leading scorer. Parker, Long, MacLean Cantley ('26), and Tyler Wilson ('26) give the Bearcats four very viable rushing options who combined for around 2,500-combined rushing yards and 29-rushing TDs. It is called "strength in numbers" or "running back by committee." All of the top receivers return in Miller Bates, Tyler Wilson, Miles Bahe, and Brohm Garlove. Of

the four, Garlove is the youngest and he will be a junior ('27). Colt Mizuguchi was automatic at PK in the PAT game (95.2%) and he is a '26 kid like much of the roster. Having a reliable kicker who can automatically convert PATs is worth a ton in the high school game come crunch time. Take our word for it. Rocco Huffman (pictured) may be among the best defensive players in the KHSAA at any level. The '26 defender had 132-stops, 11-TFLs, Eight and a half (8.5) sacks, five (5)-FFs, and a pair of FRs. Huffman separates ball carriers from the ball, gets regularly downhill, and makes plays. Bowen Johnson is also a '26 prospect and he had 100-stops, nine (9) TFLs, and four (4) sacks in '24. Johnson contributed both a FF and a pair of FRs. Of the six top defensive statistical contributors from a season ago, five are returning this year and 10 of the top 11. Jackson Miles is the only defensive stalwart not returning for another tour of duty. Deon Davidson is a rising star. He was a freshman in '24 ('28) and led the team with 3-picks and 109-IRNYs.

Davidson also had 50-tackle and three (3) TFLs to go along with his back-third success. Brohm Garlove also had three (3) picks and he housed the only "pick six" of the season. These guys are freaking loaded. Before the smoke clears, the private school from Louisville will have a say in who gets the 1A hardware. You can believe that!

## No. 3 Campbellsville Eagles

'24 record 11-3, lost to Sayre in the Semis in Lexington  
This ball club was a year away in '24 and still won 11-games. They should be really good in '25 and a likely challenger for the title. If they were to win it all, it really wouldn't surprise us. Kace Eastridge is back for his senior year ('26) and he threw for 2,000 yards and 17-TDs a year ago with a nearly 2:1, TD:INT ratio. Eastridge gained 1,346-yards rushing and scored 21-TDs on the ground making him the premier, dual threat guy in the classification and a "Mr. Football" candidate. Eastridge scored 146-points for an average of 10.4 per contest. It has been our

experience, particularly in 1A football, that a dual threat weapon like Eastridge can carry a team to a title. Cross Watson also exceeded the thousand yard threshold last year rushing. He gained 1,018-yards and scored 15-rushing TDs providing a potent one-two, backfield punch with Eastridge. Watson was second on the team in "scoring," tallying 132-points for the year. Gabriel Noyola and Watson are the two top returning receivers. Nayola ('26) caught 50-balls in '24 and gained 885-yards receiving with 10-TDs. On defense, Noyola picked a pair of passes, and accumulated 60-IRNYs with a "pick six." Kade Somerville registered 17-PATs in '24. Somerville is back in '25 hoping to increase his 58.6% conversion rate. Nine of the 11 top statistical defenders return. Shaiden Calhoun ('27) returns and he tied for the club lead with Cole Kessler ('26) with 96-registered tackles. The pair combined for 23-TFLs. KeKe Miller ('26) is also back and he led



**Top Five (1A),**  
continued from page FB5

the club with 15-TFLs and a pair of sacks among his 54-stops. Julian Smith (’28) proved to be among the better freshmen DL in the KHSAA in ’24, contributing seven (7) TFLs and a pair of sacks among his 45-stops. Braylon Beard (’26) had three (3) INTS, 55-IRNYs, and a pair of “pick sixes.” Chris Hart (’27) took an INT back 66-yards for a score contributing 46-stops and five (5) TFLs while forcing a fumble. Hart is an emerging star.

**No. 4 Sayre**

15-0, 1A champions in ’24  
When it comes to Sayre, these guys have an elite coaching staff and the type program which attracts talent. This program hasn’t been around too long but it doesn’t appear it is going anywhere. The independent, private, co-educational school in Lexington, Kentucky, which has approximately 610 students from age two through twelfth grades enrolled and 68 full-time, faculty members, has punched its ticket into the elite class of 1A football programs in the KHSAA. It looks to be a mainstay at this level of play. With the “Spartans,” it appears to be an analysis of what talent graduated versus what talent returns. You have to begin the analysis with the departing skill guys and the production which just walked

across the graduation stage. Fans like to act like graduation doesn’t happen. It does. It can really shake up a roster. How do you replace a quarterback (Luke Pennington) who, over his junior and senior years, completed 382 of 533 passing attempts, for a 72% completion rate, with 103-TD passes thrown against four (4) picks? I don’t know that one can. Remember too, with Luke Pennington at the controls, over the past two years, the Spartans logged an overall 27-1 record with a title (’24). Pretty dad-burn impressive. A program can’t lose production like that and not feel it, particularly at the 1A level. In addition to Pennington, Charlie Slabaugh and his 113-carries for 850-yards and 13-TDs a year ago has graduated. Slabaugh was a defender too; registering, in ’24, 110-tackles, seven (7) TFLs, a sack, a pick, and a pair of FFs. Try saying all that really fast, five times. Sayre also graduated Brock Coffman and his 101-receptions, 1530-yards and 27-TDs; not to mention Coffman’s 12.5 points a game, five (5) INTs and a “pick six.” The receiving corp will also miss Chase Parker’s 28-receptions, for 420-receiving yards, and eight (8) TDs as well as Kemonte Braxton’s 35-receptions for 395-yards and seven (7) receiving touchdowns not to mention

Braxton’s five (5) picks on defense. Like we said, the Spartans had a ton of talented seniors in ’24. Most championship rosters are so constructed if we are being honest. The cupboard isn’t completely barren. Coach Pennington will have some useful roster pieces back for ’25. Gannon Rice (’26) attempted a single field goal in ’24. That is the bad news. Rice did make it. That is the good news. Carson Graves (’26) returns to kick the PATs. Graves made 47 of those a year ago. Graves is reliable. There are several young guns on defense returning. Harrison Phillips (’27) tallied 96-tackles, five (5) TFLs, five (5) QB sacks, a pick, a FF, and a pair of FRs in ’24. John Luke Minner (’26) registered 40-tackles, three (3) TFLs, 12-sacks, and two (2) FFs. Minner is a dynamic, explosive defensive playmaker. The same may be said about Jackson Stuart (’26). Stuart, in ’24, registered 51-tackles, five (5) TFLs, a sack, a FF, and three (3) FRs including a 51-yard scoop and score. Rumble, big man, rumble... Beau Perry picked a pair of passes as did Caden Jones. Perry and Jones are both rising seniors and return to patrol the defensive back third. Now it is important to point out Sayre is a private school and we have no idea what students from Lexington, or

surrounding areas, decided to transfer there this offseason. We don’t report on transfers until they are declared “cleared” by the KHSAA and some of those matters are still pending. Based on what we do know, Sayre will have to replace some “hard to replace” type players on the offensive side of the ball.

**No. 5 Hazard Bulldogs**

8-5 in 2024, lost to Raceland in the regions  
This will be Matt Chandler’s second year at the helm at Hazard. What a job he did in his first season. Hazard was a two point loss on the road to Breathitt (2A) from a nine (9) win campaign. Hazard knocked an always tough Williamsburg squad out of last year’s playoff, and convincingly. Max Pelfry has graduated and that will be a huge miss (196/312, 2,444-yards, 26-TDs, six (6)-picks, 11-rushing TDs). William Shoptaw was a freshman a year ago and threw five (5) TDs to 0-INTs and the job may be his to lose. Memphis Blankenship will be another big loss as he was a thousand yard ground gainer in ’24. Now for the good news, Gavin Johnson (’27) returns and he may be a “Mr. Football” candidate in a few years. Johnson caught 85-balls for 1,069-yards and 13-TDs in ’24 as only a sophomore. Johnson scored 108-points in ’24 to lead the team and scored in all three phaes of the game (two (2) TDs rushing, 13-receiving, a KO return, six (6) two (2) point conversions). Johnson also had 51-tackles, a-FF, a-FR, and a pair of INTs. Conner Holbrook (’27) housed a pick-six from 51-yards out in ’24 and registered 92-tackles on the year with four (4) sacks. Race Lindon returns. Lindon led the club with 127-stops, a-FF, and two (2)-FRs. Caden Brewer has a bright future as the ’28 prospect registered three and a half (3.5) sacks in limited run a year ago. Before you point out Hazard made this poll position based largely on the strength of the

Johnson kid, we would point out a kid like that, who is a three (3) phase contributor, makes a huge difference in 1A football. The Bulldogs have more than just Johnson. However, having one Gavin Johnson will get a bunch of lower classification type teams a preseason ranking.

*The next five*

- 6. Pikeville, The Panthers boast a WR in Mikey Hager who runs consistent 4.4, 40’s. We probably have the Panthers too lightly regarded this preseason! Oh well, no one’s perfect...
- 7. Middlesboro
- 8. Williamsburg
- 9. Holy Cross (Lou.)
- 10. Ludlow

**2A**

**No. 1, Beechwood High (tie)**

2024 record, 14-1, 2A Champions  
Clay Hayden is gone and that is a big miss. Hayden threw for close to 3,000 yards a year ago and 46-TDs while completing over 67% of his passing attempts and throwing only 6-picks. Cole Coppage and Tyler Fryman, a pair of sophomores, look to fill those large shoes. Chase Flaherty is also departed by graduation. He gained close to 1,456 yards on the ground and scored 30-rushing TDs. The most lethal receiving threat, James Cusick, who caught 61-passes a year ago with 14-TDs and over a thousand receiving yards likewise graduated. Nathan Pabst (three INTs) a Tyler Fryman (five INTs) will plug into to lead the ball club as the pair accounted for three (3) of the team’s five (5) “pick sixes” a year ago. Colson Lair is among the best PKs in the game. Bo Sowder returns on defense and Sowder had 13-TFLs and three (3) sacks as only a sophomore. If you are looking for an off the radar type, keep an eye on rising sophomore, Garrison Wilson (’28). Wilson housed a 37-yard, “pick-six” in ’24 as a freshman. Teams like Beechwood reload, never rebuild. They lost a ton to graduation. They will

still be in the title hunt regardless. They are Beechwood!  
**No. 1 Belfry Pirates (tie)**  
2024 record, 11-3, made the 3A semis; lost to finalist, Union County  
Belfry was 11-3 a year ago and lost to Union County in the semis, the 3A, not the 2A, semis. Belfry has been re-classified into 2A.; Whether they find the sledding any easier is anyone’s guess; but, to be fair, the Pirates were doing just fine in 3A. Belfry lost its all-time coach in Phillip Haywood. How does any program replace 491-wins and 8-titles? It’s impossible. New coach Matt Varney was on the staff and has been handling the defensive side of the ball for years. What will he do with the reigns to the entire team of horses? How will the kids respond? Those are the 64-dollar questions. We just don’t know for sure. Belfry didn’t lose much off the ’24 team. Chase Varney is back at the controls of the offense. Varney, ’26 QB, threw for nearly 1,500-yards and 16-TDs a year ago running for another 8-scores on keepers. Varney also recovered 6-fumbles while the “other Varney,” Cayden, picked three passes. Cayden Varney caught 18-balls in ’24 and the ’26 receiver also tallied six scores. Jeremiah Austin is back at RB. Austin, also a ’26 prospect, gained 1,574-yards and scored 16-TDs in 206 carries. JB Woolum was a weapon too as the ’27 prospect gained nearly 900-yards a year ago and scored 16-rushing TDs to go along with his 32-receptions and 6-receiving TDs. Ace Caudill, ’26, gained 553-yards with 11-sores to go along with 21-receptions. Cayden Varney caught 18-balls in ’24 and the ’26 receiver also tallied six scores. Nick Savage returns at PK and the ’26 player tallied 67-PATs in ’24 on 71-attempts. We don’t talk enough about quality linemen in this online publication. That being  
see **Top Five (2A),**  
page FB7

**BALLARD MEMORIAL**  
**BOMBERS**



Date	Opponent	Time	H/A
8/22	Todd County Central	7 PM	H
8/29	Jo Byrns (TN)	7 PM	H
9/5	at Massac County (IL)	7 PM	A
9/12	at Calloway County	7 PM	A
9/19	Charleston (MO)	7 PM	H
9/26	South Fulton (TN)	7 PM	H
10/3	Russellville	7 PM	H
10/17	Fulton County	7 PM	H
10/24	at Caverna	7 PM	A
10/31	at Muhlenber County	7 PM	A

  
  
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Top Five (3A),  
continued from page FB7

29-rushing TDs. Miller caught a TD pass in '24, among his seven receptions, swinging out of the backfield. Miller is also the PKer where he made as many PATs as he missed.

Leading receiver Joseph Brigmon ('26) returns. Brigmon caught 21-balls for 565-yards and five (5) scores last season. Brigmon played defense where he forced a fumble, recovered a pair, registered 57-stops, four (4) TFLs, a sack, and picked a pass.;Logan Greene ('28) can spin it but was just a freshman a year ago. Greene spent more time at WR than QB and more time on defense than on offense.

Greene caught five (5) balls for 65-yards at receiver. Green registers 70-tackles, a pair of TFLs, a sack, forced a fumble, and picked off a pass while on defense.

The top defender for Bell County, this coming season, may prove to be Joshua Owens ('26). Owens registered 103-tackles, six (6) TFLs, forced a fumble, and recovered a pair of fumbles.

Two things you will have to know about any Dudley Hilton ball club. 1. The Bobcats will run the football as well as anyone. 2. They will be fundamentally sound and play football with a high IQ.

That sounds like a recipe for success and title contention to us. What do you think?

No. 3 Central High  
(Louisville)

'24 record, 9-4, lost the regional championship game to CAL

The Central you watch play this Fall won't be last year's Yellow Jackets. Cortez Stone has run out of eligibility.

Stone gained 1,882-yards on 181-carries with 30-rushing TDs in '24. Stone led the team in scoring.

Stone even registered 15-tackles. He may have also played the snare drums in the Marching Band. We aren't certain about the drums. We may have to check on that one.

However, as long as there are some Dantzler's on hand, Central will compete for a 3A title. Last time we checked we still have some "Dantzlers" around the program. Jalen Dantzler ('27) and head coach, Marvin Dantzler, are two of the foremost among the clan.

Jermaine Walker looks to fill the QB's role in the offense. Walker threw as many TDs a year ago as the QB-1. Walker is deft with his feet as he gained 248-yards rushing on 29-carries, with a pair of rushing TDs.

Rashad Johnson and Phillip Baker are a pair of '27s who both showed promise in '24. Look for those young guys to come on as the season progresses.

Defensively, you know the Jackets will be tough. Defense is kind of a Dantzler-

thing.

Destin Basemore ('27) had 64-tackles and six (6) sacks in '24.

Jaylon Wyatt Benning ('26) had 57-tackles and a pair of sacks.

Zavion Meads ('27) is a young guy with considerable promise. Meads registered 56-tackles, a pair of sacks, and a FF.

Lookout for Jalen Datzler ('27). He was set to start last season and succumbed to injury.

Dantzler made the most of his limited opportunities, registering 15-tackles and an INT while shutting down his side of the back third. No telling what Jalen would have done had the young man had a full season of reps in which to have done it.

Jalen is a 4.54-second, 40-yard dash guy who is also 6'2," 180-pound corner with an 80-inch wingspan. Before we forget, Dantzler is a 3.3-GPA guy.

Dantzler is a projected corner with back-end closing speed, an enviable frame, and incredible length. He is also crazy athletic and a full-academic, NCAA Clearinghouse qualifier.

Who isn't looking for corners like that?

No. 4 Rockcastle  
County High

'24 record, 10-2, Lost to Belfry 21-13 in round two at Belfry

The last time Rockcastle County ("The Rock") was this good Tom Larkey was coaching the boys from Mt. Vernon. Chris Larkey is at the reigns

and he has brightened the program's fortunes considerably.

The Rock won 10-games in '24 and bowed out of the playoffs in a one score margin playing the boys from Belfry in the CAM on Pond Creek. This was a semis-good caliber ball club with an unfortunately tough playoff draw.

QB Caden Lovell ('27) will be a junior in '25 and he was steady at the controls last season. Lovell passed for 10-scores and ran for another three (3).

The backfield featured a pair of thousand yard rushers and the leading rusher, Isaiah Jackson ('26) returns. Jackson gained 1,266-yards and scored 16-rushing TDs.

Jackson was also the leading receiver tying for the team lead in TD receptions with Blake Mullins ('27). Jackson was additionally the team's leading scorer. Jackson averaged over 10-points a game.

All but two (2) of the TDs receiving return for '25. The Rock will be solid when (or if) it decides to air it out.

In addition to Jackson's offensive play, Jackson led the defense with four (4) picks, 45-IRNYs, 43-tackles, four (4) TFLs, a QB-sack, a FF, and a FR. Basically, Jackson was all over the field in multiple phases for "The Rock" in '24 and should be in '25 as well.

As for Blake Mullins, in addition to his receiving skills, Mullins registered 65-tackles on defense with 16-TFLs and a team leading 10-sacks. Mullins recovered a fumble as well, so we are talking about one Heck of a versatile skill set on young Mullins.

Benjamin Brenda graduated and that will hurt. He converted 38-PATs and made three (3) of his six (6) FGs attempted. Identifying a PK in camp prior to the season's commencement will be paramount.

Most of the top defenders return. Hunter Singleton registered 134-stops, 17-TFLs, four (4)-sacks, a pair of FFs, and a pair of FRs, including a "scoop and score" in '24. The defense will look for continued leadership out of this '27 prospect.

Jaydon Bowles ('26)

is a stud. Bowles registered 47-stops, 12-behind enemy lines, sacked the opponent's QB half a dozen times (6) while recovering a fumble in '24.

Caden Lovell ('27) s a back-third, young guy to watch going forward (2 INTs) as is Brayden Thacker ('28). Thacker got run in seven (7) games and picked a pass and registered 10-stops, making the most of limited time. Thacker will have a "breakout season," in our humble opinion.

Lovell registered 23-tackles, recovered a fumble, recorded a TFL, to go with the pair of picks we above disclosed. Lovell will be joined in the backfield with a classmate, Conner Wright ('27).

Wright registered 39-tackles, four (4) TFLs, a FF, a FR, and two (2) INTs. Wright recorded one of the ball club's two "pick-sixes" in '24 (the other was senior Carter Powell).

This is a ball club which lost two games a year ago; one to an 11-win Bell County team, the other to a now 2A, 11-win, Belfry team. This is a very good ball club with a ton of production returning.

The surname "Larkey" is back on the Rockcastle County sideline. If that doesn't concern you, you may not know enough about KHSAA football history to coach it.

No. 5 Lloyd Memorial

'24 record, 9-3, lost to Russell at Russell in round two by a single point (21-20)

The boys from Erlanger have always been a problem. They were a problem which required solving in '24. The aptly called "Juggernauts" figure to be back in the title chase in '25.

Kaleb Evans is back at QB and the '26 prospect had a solid year at the controls in '24, his junior season. Evans threw for over 2,000-yards, 24-TDs, against only three (3) INTS, while rushing for another four (4) scores. We wouldn't describe him as "dual threat," but he is slippery and elusive enough to prolong plays.

The top three rushers from a year ago graduated.

However, the way the Juggernauts manage the rushing attack, it was balanced and didn't lean on any one guy that much any way.

Alijah Griffin ('26) will be a senior and he averaged 14-yards a carry in a limited role. Griffin also picked three (3) passes on defense, registered 32-tackles, recorded a TFL, and forced a fumble while recovering a fumble. Griffin can play anywhere you slot him.

Colten Barger ('28) was among the better freshmen, at the WR slot, there was anywhere in Kentucky in '24. Barger caught 30-balls for 415-yards and five (5) TDs.

Billy Lewis ('26) will align across from him. This will insure the defense has more than the one guy on whom to game plan.

Barger played "both ways." On defense, the talented freshman recorded 27-tackles. Pulling double duty, as a freshman, and delivering 30-receptions, five (5) receiving TDs, and 27-stops is what we would term "an impressive debut."

Ryan Miller ('26) is back to handle the PK duties. Miller converted 39-PATs in '24 and will look to improve on his close to 70% conversion rate. Miller also converted a critical two-pointer and was among the club's leading scorers.

Lloyd Memorial had another top-flight, Kentucky-wide freshman performer, apart from Barger. Lincoln Tomlinson ('28) had an incredible freshman season on defense.

Tomlinson registered 107-tackles, 19-TFLs, five (5) sacks, a FR, and a "pick-six" taken both to the house and covering 28-yards. They don't make freshmen like they used to and guys like Barger and Tomlinson prove it.

This is a team which sustained some losses to graduation but return enough talent to make this top-five. The difference between this team and some of the "Nevt Five" is fairly minimal.

The Next Five  
Union County-Union

see Top Five (3A),  
page FB17

Madisonville-North Hopkins

MAROONS



Date	Opponent	Time	H/A
8/22	at Union County	7 PM	A
8/29	Hopkinsville	7 PM	H
9/5	at Hopkins Co Central	7 PM	A
9/12	Paducah Tilghman	7 PM	H
9/19	at Marshall County	7 PM	A
9/26	Graves County	7 PM	H
10/2	at Muhlenberg County	7 PM	A
10/17	Apollo	7 PM	H
10/24	Owensboro	7 PM	H
10/31	at Warren Central	7:30 PM	A





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# FULTON CO. HIGH SCHOOL

2024 Final Record: 1 wins, 7 losses  
District Record: 0-3



2025 Senior Players: Fulton County senior players: Vincent Scott, Kalon McCauley, Zayden Kinney and Keaton Goodson



Coaches Corner  
**Q & A with**  
*James Bridges*  
Fulton Co. Football head coach

**Q.** What has the focus been in preparing for this season?

**A.** Putting the right players in the right position to make plays and to be more

successful is the focus this year.

**Q.** Who are some key returning players, and what roles will they play this year?  
**A.** Kalon McCauley RB / WR, Preston Smith QB, Davarius Freeman RB, Wesley Goodman CB,

Cooper Scott OL, CJ Keys DL, Zayden Kinney WR/ LB, Brayden Eakes LB, Drake Thorpe DE and Hunter Stonecipher DE are key returning players this year.

**Q.** What are some of the biggest strengths or improvements you've seen in your team compared to

last year?  
**A.** We are More focused on being a TEAM.

**Q.** Do you have any players drawing attention from college programs or who fans should keep an eye on?  
**A.** Keep an eye on Zayden Kinney and Kalon McCauley this year.

**Q.** What are the biggest challenges or tough matchups you see on your schedule this year?  
**A.** The biggest challenge we have is winning our district and hosting a playoff game that hasn't been done since 1998.



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Date	Opponent	Time	H/A
8/22	Gleason (TN)	7 PM	H
8/29	at South Fulton	7 PM	A
9/5	Calloway County	7 PM	H
9/12	TBA		
9/19	at Greenfield (TN)	7 PM	A
10/3	Caverna	7 PM	H
10/17	at Ballard Memorial	7 PM	A
10/24	at Russellville	7 PM	A
10/31	Trigg County	7 PM	H

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## GRAVES COUNTY EAGLES



Date	Opponent	Time	H/A
8/22	at Mayfield	7 PM	A
8/29	Paducah Tilghman	7 PM	H
9/5	at Murray	7 PM	A
9/12	Union County	7 PM	H
9/19	Owensboro	7 PM	H
9/26	at Madisonville-N Hop.	7 PM	A
10/3	at Apollow	7 PM	A
10/17	at Marshall County	7 PM	A
10/24	Muhlenberg County	7 PM	H
10/31	McCracken County	7 PM	H



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# GRAVES CO. HIGH SCHOOL

2024 Final Record: 9 wins, 3 losses

District Record: 4-1, finishing 2nd in district standings

Postseason Performance: Advanced to the Class 5A playoffs, winning in the first round before falling in the second round to South Warren, 35-14, ending the season 9-3



2025 Senior Players: Kyle Cole, Hunter Ditto, Malachi Frazier, Lane Lunsford, Aiden Pate, Drake Ramey, Patrick Roberts, Landon Stephens, Kobe Thomas, Adam Wilkey, Spencer Hopwood and Lorenzo Montez Arellano

photo by Wells Studio



Coaches Corner  
**Q & A with**  
*Tyler DeBernardi*  
Graves Co. Football head coach

**Q. What has the focus been in preparing for this season?**  
A.The focus has been to take it one play at a time, one practice at a time, and one day at a time. We have a lot of new starters on both sides of the ball so there has been a lot of moving around to see where each player fits in order to benefit the team the most.

**Q. Who are some key returning players, and what roles will they play this year?**  
A.Ty Cavette WR- Will

be a player to watch out for. We will try to get the ball to him as often as possible in the passing game.

Raygon Mathis DB/ WR- One of the best athletes in the entire region. Had an excellent Sophomore season with 7 interceptions on defense but will have an expanded offensive role at WR this season.

Bodie VeuCasovic WR- Will be a huge redzone target and possession WR due to his size and strength. Is a mismatch problem for

DBs at the high school level.Brady Rozzell RB- Took over as the starting RB last season against Apollo and never looked back. He will be our feature RB this season and is an excellent pass catcher out of the backfield.

Luke Jones DB- Returning starter in the secondary that was one of the best in 5A in interceptions last season.

Max Ivy DB- Returning starter in the secondary but will have an expanded role on offense this season.

Coleman Amis LB- Should emerge as the leader of the defense at Outside LB.

Kobe Thomas DL- Only returning starter on the defensive line. Is the leader of the position group and has had an

excellent offseason.

Parker Wilson WR/ DB- excellent offseason and will play all over the field on offense and defense.

Wilson Thomas WR/ DB- Great athlete and football player. Jack of all trades on the football field and provides a ton of versatility to our offense and defense.

Keegan Hopwood OL/ DL- Emerging as the leader on the offensive line and does a great job of showing up ready to work everyday.

**Q. What are some of the biggest strengths or improvements you've seen in your team compared to last year?**  
A. Players have really come together as a team and have worked tirelessly to improve.

There is a desire to be great and a work ethic that is something to see. We have also had a few players return to playing that will be a big help on the defensive side of the ball in Aiden Pate LB and Hunter Ditto LB. Both have had excellent offseasons and have improved every practice.

**Q. Do you have any players drawing attention from college programs or who fans should keep an eye on?**  
A. We have a lot of extremely talented players that everybody should keep an eye on as far as fans and colleges. It will never be about a single individual at Graves County but the team as a whole.

**Q. What are the**

**biggest challenges or tough matchups you see on your schedule this year?**  
A. Every game on our schedule is a challenge. We open our first 7 games with teams that may all be ranked in the top 10 in their respective classes and we play in one of the deepest districts not just in 5A but all of Kentucky. Every team we play has excellent coaching staff and talented players so there is no off game on the schedule. But the biggest challenge we face is ourselves. We must be able to battle every week not only physically but mentally as well. The season will be filled with highs and lows. How we navigate those will determine how successful we are at the end of the season.



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George Halas



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# HOPKINSVILLE HIGH SCHOOL

**2024 Final Record: 3 wins -7 losses**

**District Record: 2-3**



Coaches Corner

## Q & A with *Dustin Lopez*

Hopkinsville Football head coach

**Q. What has the focus been in preparing for this season?**  
To develop depth on both sides of the football.

**Q. Who are some key returning players, and what roles will they play this year?**  
A. ATH James Bradley Jr- Will Start at QB after totaling over

1,000 yards rushing & receiving last fall. WR Aiden Jesse- Long lean WR who transferred from Christian County. Will be the top Receiving target this fall.

**Q. What are some of the biggest strengths or improvements you've seen in your team compared to last year?**

A. Depth & Speed

**Q. Do you have any players drawing attention from college programs or who fans should keep an eye on?**

A. De'Andre Watkins DB/RB- NAIA Offers  
James BBradley Jr- Southern Miss  
Aiden Jesse- Southern Miss & UT Martin

**Q. What are the biggest challenges or tough matchups you see on your schedule this year?**  
Playing 6A football with a school enrollment of 950 kids,

which is a 4A enrollment. South Warren, McCracken County, Madisonville, Henderson County will all present major challenges for us this fall.



**CRITTENDEN COUNTY**

# ROCKETS



Date	Opponent	Time	H/A
8/22	at Marshall County	7 PM	A
8/29	Union County	7 PM	H
9/5	Webster County	7 PM	H
9/12	Union City (TN)	7 PM	H
9/19	at Mayfield	7 PM	A
9/26	at Trigg County	7 PM	A
10/3	Todd County Central	7 PM	H
10/17	at Fort Campbell	7 PM	A
10/24	Caldwell County	7 PM	H
10/31	at Hopkins County Cen	7 PM	A

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## MARSHALL COUNTY

2	Sylas Winding	WR,	CB	So.		
3	Cash Henson	CB,	WR		6'2" 172	
3	Kaden Mohler	WR		Sr.	5'11" 170	
5	Aidan Roy	FB,	MLB	Sr.	5'11" 200	
6	Wyatt Holley	DE		So.	6'0" 180	
8	Levi Jetton	WR,	CB	So.	5'7" 140	
11	Neyland Jezik	QB		Sr.	6'3" 185	
14	Kolten Winsett	QB,	SS	So.	5'10" 147	
16	Kam Brown	TE,	DE	Sr.	6'5" 205	
20	Mason Joyce	RB		So.		
24	Jake Thomasson	RB,	OLB	So.	5'11" 155	
25	Jett Jones	WR,	SS	So.	5'11" 157	
30	Skyler Jones	WR,	CB	Sr.		
33	Kayson Holland	RB,	CB	Sr.	5'10" 160	
36	Jasper Jones	MLB,	FB	So.	5'7" 155	
39	Nathan Knight	OLB,	FB	Sr.	5'11" 200	
50	Collin McLean	C	DE	Sr.	6'0" 215	

59	Jerrek Harris		So.		
60	Conner Gibson	G	So.		
61	John Kenady	DE,	T	So.	6'0" 189
64	Landon MacKey	DT,	G	Jr.	5'8" 220
68	Blake Powell	T,	G	Fr.	
71	Alex Robinson	C,	LS	So.	6'3"
74	Landen Thorn	LS,	G	Jr.	6'2" 225
75	Carson Burton	G,	NG	Jr.	5'8"
78	Alan Agee	T,	NG	So.	6'5"
79	Elijah Holt	G,	NG	Sr.	6'3"
81	Noah Carroll		WR	Fr.	
85	Andre King	WR,	CB	Fr.	
86	Reece Reid	RB,	OLB	So.	5'9" 155
87	Cody Haynes			Jr.	6'1" 175
89	Riley Brewer	MLB,	OLB	So.	5'11"

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# McCracken Co. HIGH SCHOOL

**2024 Final Record: 6 Wins, 6 losses**

District Record: (3-0 in district play)

1<sup>st</sup> place in 6a District 1.  
Advanced to class 6a  
2<sup>nd</sup> round losing to central hardin



2025 Senior Players: Cayden Anderson, Reed Brookshire, Kasey Chandler, Mason Clark, Sam Goodman, Isaac Hart, Dawson Hayden, Lucas Hoffman, David Keeling, Hunter Neely, Landon Newman, Braedyn Noland, Maddox O’Neil, Ashton Ollivierre, Kaine Rose, Monte Rush, Jeffery Tindall, Alex Wilham and Nolan Winstead. Photo by: Matt Hernandez Creative



Coaches Corner  
**Q & A with**  
*Tyler Brooks*  
McCracken Co. Football head coach

**Q. What has the focus been in preparing for this season?**  
A. Our focus this year has been improving on our end of season success last year. Last

year was the first time we won our district since 2020. It was a big step for our program and we are looking to take the next step this year.

**Q. Who are some key returning players, and what roles will they play this year?**  
A. Key Returning Players: SR. QB Maddox O’Neal, SR. WR/DB Reed Brookshire, SR.RB/DB Dawson Hayden SR. RB/LB Landon Newman, SR. WR/LB Nolan Winstead, SR. DL Lukas Hoffman, SR. DL Kaine Rose and SR. TE/DL Sam

Goodman  
**Q. What are some of the biggest strengths or improvements you’ve seen in your team compared to last year?**  
A. Our Biggest strength is our depth on both sides of the ball. We can play a lot of kids and keep our guys fresh.  
**Q. Do you have any**

**players drawing attention from college programs or who fans should keep an eye on?**  
A. Players Drawing College Attention SR. Maddox O’Neal: Murray St. University/Eastern Kentucky University Jr. Max Watson: Wofford So. Jude Lanier: Nichols State University

Fr. Cole Presswood: Murray St. University/Eastern Kentucky University/ Nichols State University  
**Q. What are the biggest challenges or tough matchups you see on your schedule this year?**  
A. Biggest Challenges: Week 1 vs Paducah Tilghman



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# TILGHMAN HIGH SCHOOL

**2024 Final Record: 15-0**  
**A perfect season**

District Record: 5-0 in Region 4A,  
District 1 - Unbeaten in district play  
State Title: Champions of Class 4A, defeating Franklin  
County 27-20 at Kroger Field to secure their  
4th state championship



2025 Senior Players: Jaron Anderson Jr., Brenden Brown, Mason Copeland, Stone Crowe, Javin Dukes, Nate Gregg, Aiden Hilton, Camdin Isom, Taveus Jackson, Hank James, Blane Kolb, Elias McPike, Ben Myers, Je'Marion Purdiman, Corde' Rawlind, Blair Sains, Jarvis Strickland Jr., Braden Talbert, Camden Thomas, Cam Wade, Jayven Williams and DJ Wilson.

Photo by: Matt Hernandez Creative



Coaches Corner  
**Q & A with**  
*Sean Thompson*

Paducah Tilghman Football head coach

**Q. What has the focus been in preparing for this season?**  
A. Focus has been on getting better each day. We lost a large senior class and have a lot of positions to fill. We are also looking for

guys to step into leadership roles, thats the biggest void left by the loss of a 26 man senior class.

**Q. Who are some key returning players, and what roles will they play this year?**

A. Jarvis Strickland and Ben Myers - Offensive line. Stone Crowe - Quarterback. DJ Wilson - Running back and linebacker. Hank James - Defensive Back. Brady Sanderson - Linebacker. Isaac James - Linebacker. Avery Thompson - Wide receiver and Defensive back. Cam Wade - Wide receiver and Defensive back. Chance McPike - Wide receiver and Defensive

back. All these will be key players this year.  
**Q. What are some of the biggest strengths or improvements you've seen in your team compared to last year?**  
A.This team will be different from last. Hard to tell what they are at this point. This team is fast  
**Q. Do you have any players drawing attention from**

**college programs or who fans should keep an eye on?**  
A.Jarvis Strickland and Ben Myers - Offensive line. Hank James - Defensive Back. Avery Thompson - Wide receiver and Defensive back. Cam Wade - Wide receiver and Defensive back. Chance McPike - Wide receiver and Defensive back. All these are drawing attention that is well deserved.

**Q. What are the biggest challenges or tough matchups you see on your schedule this year?**  
A.McCracken will be improved. Mayfield is always tough and Madisonville will be a tough opponent as well.





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## PADUCAH-TILGHMAN TORNADO



Date	Opponent	Time	H/A
8/22	at McCracken County	7 PM	A
8/29	at Graves County	7 PM	A
9/5	Mayfield	7 PM	A
9/12	at Madisonville-NHop	7 PM	A
9/19	Franklin Simpson	7 PM	H
9/26	Allen County-Scottsville	7 PM	H
10/3	Logan County	7 PM	H
10/17	at Warren East	7 PM	A
10/24	at Calloway County	7 PM	A
10/31	Christian County	7 PM	H

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# MAYFIELD HIGH SCHOOL

**2024 Final Record: 9 wins, 3 losses**  
District Record: 4-0 (undefeated in district play)

Finished 1st in Class 2A Region 1 with a 7-2 regular-season record and a perfect 3-0 district slate. Advanced into the Class 2A playoffs, winning multiple games, including a second-round win over Caldwell County (48-21), before being eliminated



2025 Senior Players: Owen Byrd, Zane Cook, Reggie Dowell, Maxon Fisher, Mak Hoover, Thayer Henley, Jalal Islam, Malik Kirby, Will Morris, Ashton Rodgers, Kyler Simpson, Angel Torres, Diego Torres, Grandon Townsend, Garin Wilson and Maurice Johnson  
photo by Wells Studio



Coaches Corner  
**Q & A with**  
*Cliff Dew*

Mayfield Football head coach

**Q. What has the focus been in preparing for this season?**  
A. The focus has been on improving and preparing for another long season. We expect to be playing in December so we

have a long way to go.  
**Q. Who are some key returning players, and what roles will they play this year?**  
A. Malik Kirby - WR and CB Returning starter with huge potential, Mak

Hoover - DB and WR Special skill set makes him versatile and a threat any time, Will Morris - TE and DL Could be a dominate player at both positions, Josiah England - RB and CB Top returning rusher and has embraced the CB role on defense, Zane Cook - OL and DL Leader and anchor of our offensive line, Ashton Rogers - DL Returning starter on

the defensive line who could be a force to have to deal with.  
**Q. What are some of the biggest strengths or improvements you've seen in your team compared to last year?**  
A. The biggest difference in this team is experience. So many of our players last year were first year guys and now with a year under their belt they

have improved in all facets of the game.  
**Q. Do you have any players drawing attention from college programs or who fans should keep an eye on?**  
A. Mak Hoover, Will Morris, Zane Cook, Malik Kirby, and Ashton Rogers have all gotten college looks.  
**Q. What are the biggest challenges**


**or tough matchups you see on your schedule this year?**  
A. The first 4 games are always a tough stretch with big rivalries and playing big schools. The challenge is to get through that part of the schedule healthy before going into district play. Adding Louisville Central at week 11 will give us a good measuring stick before the playoffs start.







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## MAYFIELD CARDINALS




Date	Opponent	Time	H/A
8/22	Graves County	7 PM	H
8/29	at Christian County	7 PM	A
9/5	at Paducah Tilghman	7 PM	A
9/12	McCracken County	7 PM	H
9/19	Crittenden County	7 PM	H
9/26	at Todd Co Central	7 PM	A
10/3	at Caldwell County	7 PM	A
10/17	at Trigg County	7 PM	A
10/24	Fort Campbell	7 PM	H
10/31	Central	7 PM	H



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# MURRAY HIGH SCHOOL

**2024 Final Record: 8 Wins, 3 losses**

District Record: 2-1 in district play, placing 2nd in their region behind Mayfield

Playoffs: Advanced to the Class 2A second round  
Defeated Edmonson County in the first round (48-7)  
Lost to Owensboro Catholic in the second round (14-49)



2025 Senior Players: Amarion Bomar, Will Burkeen, Meech Carman, Julian Figueroa, Hank Fronza, Deerik Jackson, Nate Johnston, Isiah Martin, Simon Rickman, Wyatt Robbins, Nemo Robinson and Josh Bridges.



Coaches Corner  
**Q & A with**  
*Melvin Cunningham*  
Murray Football head coach

**Q. What has the focus been in preparing for this season?**  
A. Our focus has been on discipline, communication, and physicality. These three qualities are non-negotiable when defining success.

**Q. Who are some key returning players, and what roles will they play this year?**  
A. Returning players are Isaiah Martin, Wyatt Robbins, Simon Rickman, Meech Carman, Ryan Walls, Gage Keeling, Gage

Chapman, Zaye Richardson, Jesse Clark are among a few. Their role is to be culture drivers. The have to hold teammates accountable to the standard.

**Q. What are some of the biggest strengths or improvements you've seen in your team compared to last year?**  
A.The biggest improvement has been with our leadership. We did a good job this

summer with our leadership development program and seeing the growth of some of our players has already had an impact on our team.

**Q. Do you have any players drawing attention from college programs or who fans should keep an eye on?**  
A. Ryan Walls has multiple offers-Florida State, Isaiah Martin has multiple offers-UT Martin, Gage Chapman has multiple

offers-Murray State, Simon Rickman and Wyatt Robbins-Bethel

**Q. What are the biggest challenges or tough matchups you see on your schedule this year?**  
A. One of our biggest challenges is ourselves. Most games are lost not won. Health is a huge factor. When coaching this size of school, one injury creates multiple moves. The tough match-ups on our schedule is Graves

County, McCracken County, Union, to name a few. To win at any level is hard so we have 10 must win games in the first season and it starts over in the play-offs. Our toughest game on the schedule is Apollo because it is the only game we play in week 1.





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## MURRAY TIGERS



Date	Opponent	Time	H/A
8/22	at Apollo	7 PM	A
8/29	Calloway County @MS	7 PM	H
9/5	Graves County	7 PM	H
9/12	Marshall County	7 PM	H
9/19	at Russellville	7 PM	A
9/26	at McCracken	7 PM	A
10/3	at Webster County	7 PM	A
10/24	Hopkins Co Central	7 PM	H
10/31	Caldwell County	7 PM	H

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# MARSHALL CO. HIGH SCHOOL

**2024 Final Record: 3 wins, 7 losses**

District Record: 1-4



2025 Senior Players: Ethan Webber, Cheston Townsend, Aidan Roy, Clayton Ordunez, Nate Oakley, Luke Nimmo, Kaden Mohler, Collin MClean, Carson Lichtenberg, Nathan Knight, Neyland Jezik, Wyatt Holley, Kayson Holland, Grant Franklin, Deegan Croley, Kam Brown, Eli Holt, Jayden Holland, Kaleb Byars and Skylar Jones



Coaches Corner

## Q & A with *Nick Bloodworth* Marshall Football head coach

Q.What has the focus been in preparing for this season?  
A. We have been

working on continuing to build our culture and come together as a team. Q. Who are some key returning players, and what roles will they play this year? A. We have several returning starters on both side of the ball

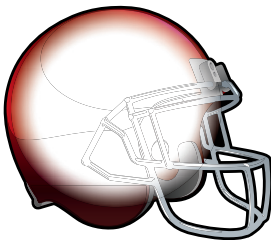
and are lucky to return several Sophomores that logged key snaps last season.

Q. What are some of the biggest strengths or improvements you've seen in your team compared to last year? A. Having the same coaching staff coming back has been very helpful throughout the offseason and summer camp. This has helped to further create our culture for hard work, teaching players our schemes, and building relationships. We also return several

players that logged some big time snaps for us last year. Having these guys coming back will help us get over the hump in close games.

Q. What are the biggest challenges or tough matchups you see on your schedule this year? A. There isn't a team on our schedule that we can afford to overlook. Every team

we play is very competitive and has coaching staffs that do a great job of having their teams prepared. We also play in a very competitive district, where each team is aiming for competing for the region. We are looking forward to the challenge and playing our best football when we start our district schedule.





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### MARSHALL COUNTY MARSHALS



Date	Opponent	Time	H/A
8/22	Crittenden County	7 PM	H
8/29	at Caldwell County	7 PM	A
9/5	at Trigg County	7 PM	A
9/12	at Murray	7 PM	A
9/19	Madisonville-N Hopkins	7 PM	H
9/26	at Muhlenberg County	7 PM	A
10/3	at Owensboro	7 PM	A
10/17	Graves County	7 PM	H
10/24	Apollo	7 PM	H
10/31	at Calloway County	7 PM	A

## Let's Go Marshals

**2024 Season**



**Tiffany Fralicx Griffith**  
Marshall County Circuit Clerk



**Top Five (3A),**  
continued from page FB8

lost Jarren Johnson, Amare Black, and Kamden Davis to graduation plus many, many more off the 3A finalist club we saw in '24. They are Union County and are excellently coached; but will need some shoes filled.

McLean County-McLean has the best running back, not named Evan Hampton, on the western end of KY (Aden Bolden, '26, 1,439-yards rushing and 13-TDs in '24). Zach Wagner does a fine job and McLean is always hard to handle.

Lexington Catholic-David Clark is among the best coaches in the KHSAA and the turn around the Knights experienced in '24 was a testament to that fact. When you only win 7-games but made the semis that says something about the coaching staff most administrations admire. It says something about the teams you schedule as well. This team experienced heavy losses to graduation but don't feign surprise if they figure out a way to get in contention in '25.

Mercer County-Craig Yeast has brought in a young coach named Chuck Collins to run his weight program and help on Friday nights. The Collins family is amongst the "first families" of the KHSAA. It is like hiring a "Jaggers." They hired a Jaggers once at Mercer and that seemed to work out pretty well if my memory isn't failing me.

Hopkins County Central-Central has one of the better multi-phase guys around in Sylas Gunn ('26). Gunn threw nine TDs, rushed for a TD, and registered 104-tackles, six (6) TFLs, a sack, and picked a pair of passes as a junior. Kristan Scott will be a "difference maker" along the scrimmage lines and Dallas Kinlaw will come out of nowhere to contribute mightily. This ball club figures to do much better than the four (4) wins it experienced in both '23 and '24. Chris Manning (HFC) does an excellent job coaching and promoting his program.

This is Friday Night Fletch, reporting for KPGFootball and KPI Newspaper Group, reminding you to PLAY THROUGH THE WHISTLE!

4A

No. 1 Boyle County

'24 record, 12-1, lost to Covington Catholic at home in the regional championship game by three points (31-28).

Baylor Murphy ('26) was solid under center in his junior campaign. Murphy completed 77% of his passing attempts (135/176) for over 2,000-yards with 30-TDs against a lone INT.

Murphy has the best TE prospect in the South/Midwest, in the '27 class, to target down the field in Randy Driver's son, and Tony Driver's nephew. His name is Seneca Driver and he is a grown man.

Driver is 6'7," and weighs 240-pounds. We were told Driver stuck the landing on a back flip at practice the other day just for giggles (because he wanted to try it).

Driver caught 24-balls in '24 for 353-yards and seven (7) TDs. Driver also scored 50-points.

Driver played defense too. Driver registered 36-tackles, seven (7) TFLs, a pair of sacks, and forced a fumble. Many people believe him to be Kentucky's top rated prospect in any graduating class.

Driver has 37-FBS offers presently. Driver is a 5.8-rated, Four (4)-Star on most all the national recruiting services.

Driver has an 80-inch wingspan, 10" hands, runs the 40 in 4.66-seconds, and shuttles in 4.5-seconds. Driver has a broad jump of 9'9."

Nathaniel Schepman is a "big play" threat. As a sophomore, he averaged over 16-yards a reception and scored a TD every 4.5-receptions.

Clifton Yocum ('26) looks ready to lead defensively. Yocum registered 43-tackles, five (5) TFLs, and five (5) sacks. Kain Logan ('27) pitched in a pair of TFLs and Jakeem Ray and JiDyn Smith-Hisel each contributed a pair of INTs.

There is no way around this single fact which keeps putting Boyle in yearly championship discussions. Justin Haddix is among the best in the business in Kentucky's coaching fraternity.

Haddix has compiled a 145-42 record with four (4) titles (2020, '21, '22, '23) in six (6) attempts (Corbin, played for the title in 2017, 2018). Any team which trots out onto the field with Justin Haddix as its head football coach has a chance, a very good one.

No. 2 Covington Catholic

'24 record, 11-3, lost to Franklin County in the semis

There can't be a better dual threat guy, at QB, than Covington Catholic's Cash Harney. This guy is 5'10," 170-pounds of dynamite and a solid "Mr. Football" candidate.

Harney threw for 1,303-yards and 13-TDs in '24 and rushed for 1,476-yards and 19-TDs. Cash led the team in scoring with 116-points and none of his 13-TDs passing were credited to him. Harney even recovered a fumble.

Most importantly, Harney led his team to an 11-win season and a berth in the semi-finals. Harney is "Lexington or Bust" in 2025.

Dylan Gaiser ('26) is back to form a potent 1-2 punch in the offensive backfield with Harney. Gaiser gained 1,378-yards from scrimmage with 15-TDs on 131-carries. Gaiser played a little defense too. Gaiser had 35 stops and three (3) INTs.

We like Owen Pitzer ('27) a great deal as an up and comer. In addition to his work at RB in a limited capacity, 65-yards and five (5) rushing TDs, one TD swinging out of the backfield and a two-point conversion; Pitzer did some outstanding work on defense registering 57-tackles and a sack.

Logan Sanning ('26) is back for the '25 defense and Sanning had a productive junior season. Sanning registered 47-stops, half a sack, a FF, a FR, and three (3) INTs. Matter of fact, the Colonels in blue picked 25-passes a year ago

and approximately 20 of those picks return in '25. Thrown on them if you wish, but you do so at your own peril.

No. 3 Corbin

'24 record, 12-2, lost to Tilghman (Paducah) in the semis

Much like Paducah Tilghman's losing Jack James, Corbin lost Kade Elam and he (also) was a once in a generation-type talent at the QB position for the Redounds. Elam passed for 3,411-yards and 40-TDs, in '24, while completing 75% of his passes (200/268). Elam only threw three (3) picks.

Elam rushed for nearly 500-yards and 16-rushing TDs. You just need to fully appreciate what losing a Kade Elam actually means and how good Elam actually was.

We get tired of fans critiquing our preseason polls with "We're coming of a 12-2 record and we lost to Freddy D and Tilghman. How can you rank us third, or fourth, or whatever?"

Fans don't like to acknowledge graduation. Not all these guys who walk across the graduation stage are easily replaced.

Cole Stevens ('26) is back at RB and he came close to gaining a thousand yards a year ago. He also scored 10-rushing TDs.

Cam Estep ('26) returns and he is as talented as any pass-catcher across the commonwealth. Estep caught 63-passes for 1,027-yards and nine (9) TDs a year ago. Estep also caught five (5)

passes not even targeting him (INTs). Estep registered 43-tackles in '24.

Eli Pietrowski ('26) and Cole Stevens ('26) both return and they will keep defenses from doubling Estep. Pietrowski faced a pair of fumbles last year.

Pietrowski's unafraid to hit. Pietrowski's 37-registered tackles, three (3) TFLs, and four (4) sacks tells me my impression is entirely accurate.

Bryson Hopkins ('28) is a young guy who should be monitored this coming year. Just a word to the wise, this kid is a playmaker.

Noah Cima will be a huge miss. Cima scored 13-TDs receiving, converted a FG, converted 76-PATs to contribute 157-points to the team in '24. Add him to the list of talent, with Kade Elam, which may be hard to replace.

Mason Salmons ('27) looks to be a star in the making. Salmons had 76-tackles a year ago with a TFL and a sack. Salmons forced a fumble and recovered a pair.

Malachi Brown ('27) is one of the better players in Kentucky at his slot and in his graduating class. Brown registered 46-tackles, 10-TFLs, and eight (8) sacks. You don't see young guys get "down hill" like Brown very often.

This isn't last year's team. They won't be quite as good this year as last. That said, they are still the Corbin Redhounds. That is a name we have come to fear, around the KHSAA, and with good

reason.

No. 4 Paducah Tilghman

'24 record, 15-0, won the 4A title

Sure, "The Blue Tornado" touched down in Lexington last December. Sure, Tilghman High (Paducah) polished off a 15-0 overall record and a 4A title in '24. However, that was then...this is now.

Say whatever you want, but graduating a QB who threw for over 4,100-yards, 57-TD passes against only nine (9) picks, and completed close to 70% of his 438-passing attempts (304) all in one season will be far from simple. Quarterbacks like Jack James don't come around too often in a coach's career.

There is still some talent on "The Blue Tornado" roster. We don't bring up linemen enough but Jarvis Strickland ('26) may be among the best OL I have seen since I began covering KHSAA football.

Strickland has the size (6'6," 290) and disposition to take over ball games from his tackle slot. Strickland is the highest rated recruit in Kentucky.

Demarkus Wilson ('26) gained 828-yards rushing in '24 and scored 11-rushing TDs to go with his 66-points he put up on the scoreboard. Avery Thompson ('28) is a budding super star in the receiver corp. Thompson caught

see **Top Five (4A),**  
page FB18

UNION COUNTY  
BRAVES

Date	Opponent	Time	H/A
8/22	Madionsville-N Hopkins	7 PM	H
8/29	at Crittenden County	7 PM	A
9/5	at Caldwell County	7 PM	A
9/12	at Graves County	7 PM	A
9/19	McCracken County	7 PM	H
9/26	Hancock County	7 PM	H
10/3	at Hopkins Co Central	7 PM	A
10/17	Murray	7 PM	H
10/24	Webster County	7 PM	H
10/31	at Greenwood	7 PM	A

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Top Five (4A), continued from page FB17

36-balls in only nine (9) games for 454-yards receiving and eight (8) TDs.

Russell Hancock and Tate Kirchoff were both seniors a year ago. Between them, they made 90 of 94-attempted PATs for a conversion rate approaching 96%. Hancock made a FG. That is quite a bit of scoring which will have to be found elsewhere.

Defensively, look for Brady Sanderson (’27) to answer defensive coordinator’s Steve Lovelace’s call for service. Sanderson registered 61-tackles, six (6) TFLs, and a sack last season.

Keep an eye on Isaac James (’28). James was only a freshman and played in 9-games.

Limited playing time aside, James register 23-tackles, a TFL, recovered a fumble, and picked a pass. You don’t see that type production from a freshman defender on a roster which went 15-0 and won it all in the 4A classification that often.

Gae’lon Spivey-Nunn (’28) was a freshman in ’24 too. He only saw run in four (4) varsity games in ’24. However, Spivey-Nunn registered five (5) tackles and a pair of INTs. We call that making the action count.

If we are being honest, and we strive to be, Tilghman lost quite a bit from off of last year’s team. That being said, they are still excellently

coached and have enough pieces remaining to warrant this preseason ranking.

No. 5 Ashland (tie)

’24 record, 11-2, was pasted by Corbin in the Regional Championship

Like so many teams listed herein, there isn’t a person left on this roster who has ever completed (nor thrown) a varsity forward pass. On top of that, leading rusher Braxton Jennings also graduated.

Between LaBryant Stader’s 25-TD passes a year ago with Jennings 20-rushing TDs, that is a ton of scoring the Tomcats will have to find somewhere else. If I were going to have to come up with that level of offensive production, I would like to have Chad Tackett coaching my team.

Paul Blazer High will feed the ball to Cameron Davis (’26) and Maverick Ashby (’27). Davis gained over 500-yards last yard and scored nine (9) TDs rushing while Ashby gained close to 500 (452) on only 73-carries, scoring six (6) rushing TDs while catching eight (8) passes swinging out of the backfield.

Davis also contributed 47-tackles, a TFL, and picked off six (6) INTs. Davis maybe the most versatile player in 4A.

Davis was the leading receiver in ’24, catching 35-balls for 615-yards and eight (8) TDs receiving. Davis will get “Mr. Football”

attention this Fall. Sam Lyons (’26) returns and he caught 35-balls for 514-yards and five (5) TDs to go along with his pair of INTs he snagged on defense. Lyons forced a fumble, recovered a pair, and logged 32-tackles with three (3) TFLs to augment his offensive production.

Troy Barnett (’26) has a final year of eligibility and that is huge for the Tomcats. Barnett converted 46-PATs, of his 53-attempted, and was perfect in FGs, although he only attempted one. Hey, better to make the single attempt than miss it, right?

Seth Morris (’28) is waiting in the wings. He made seven of his 13-attempted PATs. To see much action, Morris has to improve on that 54% conversion rate.

Keyshawn Newman (’26) registered 56-tackles, six (6) TFLs, and four (4) QB-sacks a year ago. Newman will figure prominently in the Tomcats’s defensive plans in ’25.

The bottom line is this, Blazer will be in the hunt because they are Blazer and the coach is Chad Tackett. However, that aside, we can’t just pretend they didn’t suffer significant losses. They most certainly did.

No. 5 Fort Thomas Highlands (tie)

’24 Record: 11-3 in 5A, Lost in the Semis to Cooper

The Bluebirds are among the more decorated programs in

KHSAA history. While Fort Thomas Highlands has won 23-titles, they haven’t won a title since 2014.

Man, that is over 10-years ago (not counting ’25 which we haven’t yet played). If you would have told me in 2014 Highlands wouldn’t win another title over the next decade or so, I would have walked away from the conversation thinking you’re crazy.

The Bluebirds have a chance this season, coming off an 11-win campaign and semis loss to state finalist, Cooper. They are sliding down to 4A and 4A may end up being an even tougher nut to crack than 5A, particularly this season. Not easy to get through any classification that hosts teams like Boyle, Paducah Tilghman, Covington Catholic, Corbin, Franklin County, Paul Blazer, etc.

QB Rio (Mario) Litmer (’26) is another of those 4A “Mr. Football” candidates. Litmer threw for nearly 3,000-yards in ’24 with 33-TDs while rushing for another five (5) scores. Litmer completed 69% of his passing attempts and had a smidgen over 4:1 touchdown to interception ratio.

Gabe Williams will be the top returning rusher and the ’27 prospect had a decent enough year for a kid getting on the field for Highlands as only a sophomore. Williams rushed for 344-yards and four (4) touchdowns and looks to improve on those numbers dramatically. Gabe Williams paced the DBs with five (5) INTs in ’24.

Tayden Lorenzen is a ’27 guy with an eerily familiar surname. He caught 31-balls in ’24, eight (8) of which were for TDs. Lorenzen also scored 74-points a year ago.

Kai Anderson (’27) appears to be the heir-apparent at PK. Anderson was a perfect seven (7) for seven (7) in PATs a year ago.

Isaac Neimann will be counted on to lead the defense. Neimann had 57-tackles last year with seven (7) TFLs, three (3) sacks, six (6) FFs, and a pair of FRs.

How much better is Highlands than Franklin County, Johnson Central,

DeSales, and Perry County Central? At the end of the day, I suppose will shall see. I believe the line to be rather thin though

Rounding out the Top-10

Franklin County, No. 7, had huge losses on defense and will have many untested players on that side of the ball. Knox Barrett (’28) should improve quite a bit and Jack Oldham will get the lion’s share of the carries. This is an excellently coached ball club (Eddie James, HFC) which could easily slip up into the top five.

Johnson Central, No. 8, is coming off an 8-4 worksheet in ’24. Losing a 2300-yard rusher in Zack McCoart won’t be easy as this offense depends more on RB than QB. Logan Music is very, very good. Seth Davis is a huge loss on defense.

Perry County Central, No. 9, just kind of fell apart a year ago, plummeting to four (4) wins on the year. That won’t happen again is our wager. Mark Dixon is as good as it gets as a head football coach and the Johnson brothers, Aaron David “AD” (’26) and Bryson (’28), are both heady, knowledgeable, and talented ball players who both worked extensively with a speed trainer this offseason. Bryson Johnson is as good of a young LB as you will ever see at the HS level.

North Oldham, No. 10, and its head football coach, Brock Roberts, has the Mustangs hitting on all cylinders coming off a nine (9) win campaign. QB Colin Daniels (’26) is a really fine player and last year threw for over 2,300-yards with 30-TDs against five (5) INTs. Daniels completed a smidgen over 67% of his passes (184/274). Lucas Thompkins is a “Mr. Football” candidate and led his team as a junior in scoring. Additionally, Thompkins caught 50-passes for 887-yards and 14-TDs, scored four (4) TDs rushing, and converted three (3), two-pointers on special teams. Thompkins played defense and picked five (5) passes and accumulated 90-IRNYs. We call that three (3) phase utility and it is a

prized commodity at the 4A, 5A, and 6A levels.

5A

No. Cooper

’24 Record: 14-1, State Runner-up, lost to Bowling Green 37-20

Cooper, under Randy Borchers, has been to the 5A title game the last two seasons, losing both times to Bowling Green. We believe the third time may be the charm.

Cooper has some weaponry returning. QB, Cam O’Hara is a real threat. O’Hara is a ’26 prospect and a “Mr. Football” candidate. He threw for 3,617-yards and 52-TDs in ’24 against only three (3)-INTs. O’Hara completed over 65% of his attempts (212/325) and ran for four (4) scores. This might be Kentucky’s elite player at the QB-position in ’25 among all KHSAA schools regardless of classification.

Talk about your running threats, Keagan Maher returns and he will vie for the coveted “Mr. Football” distinction before it is all said and done. Maher is dangerous out of the backfield in passing routes as he caught 22-balls in ’24. Cooper graduated two fine receivers in Isaiah Johnson and Jaiden Combs and one of Kentucky’s all-time TEs in the high school ranks in Austin Alexander, but O’Hara will find someone to target down the field and Maher will be among his choices.

Look for Ryker Campbell to develop in the passing game. Ryker is already a leading returning defender (102-tackles, 2-TFLs, 1-FF, and eight (8) picks including a pair of “pick-sixes”). Don’t be surprised if the ’26 prospect doesn’t get involved more heavily on offense in ’25. Campbell ran the ball from scrimmage some as he averaged around 11.5-yards a carry in ’24 and scored a rushing TD every fifth carry.

Keagan Maher gained 1,433-yards and scored 22-rushing TDs in ’24 and the ’26 prospect proved himself to possess a versatile, multi-phase

see Top Five (5A), page FB19

WEBSTER COUNTY

TROJANS



Date	Opponent	Time	H/A
8/22	at Calloway County	7 PM	A
8/29	Muhlenberg County	7 PM	H
9/5	at Crittenden County	7 PM	A
9/12	Caldwell County	7 PM	H
9/19	McLean County	7 PM	H
9/26	at Ohio County	7 PM	A
10/3	Murray	7 PM	H
10/17	Hopkins Co. Central	7 PM	H
10/24	at Union County	7 PM	A
10/31	at Todd Co. Central	7 PM	A

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**Top Five (5A),**  
continued from page FB18

skill set. Maher was the team’s leading scorer (150-points) in addition to being among the leading receivers and leading return threats on special teams.

Eyler Tibbs (’26) was something a year ago, converting 75-PATs, and making two of his three FG attempts. Corey Freihofer (’27) can kick it too, as he converted 87.5% of his PATs with limited opportunities and even recovered a fumble. Freihofer registered 15-tackles in ’24 playing for one of Kentucky’s most talented rosters. Keep you eye on this young man.

Max Wethington returns at the “Mike” or MLB slot. The ’26 second level guy registered 75-tackles, 3-TFLs, and picked off a pass.

Dax Bolen also returns as the ’26 prospect registered 70-tackles, 3-TFLs, a QB sack, and a pair of INTs. Carson Clark (’27) has demonstrated a penchant for big plays. Clark had three (3) sacks a year ago amongst his 14-stops. Clark forced a fumble too. That amounts to quite a few “specialty stats” for someone who played limited snaps spread out over 11-games of action.

**No. 2 Bowling Green (Senior High)**

’24 Record: 13-2, State 5A champions

First of all, let’s get this out of the way. The Purples are working on a three-peat and have won three of the past five titles in 5A football.

Picking Bowling Green (right now, anyway) to win the 5A title is a sexy pick. That doesn’t mean we will do it. Should another publication do so, we would hardly blame them.

Bad News doesn’t improve with time. The bad news is Bowling Green High’s Deuce Bailey is out of eligibility.

Bailey threw for close to 3,200-yards in ’24 and 45 passing TDs. The “Deuce” also ran for over 400-yards and 5-rushing TDs.

Losing that level of production from such a prime-time position is tough on any program regardless of the

program’s classification. It looks to us like Embree Dotson (’27) will get the first crack at filling those shoes.

They can always snap the ball to Trevy Barber. He attempted a pass a year ago and certainly knows where he’s headed with the ball in his hands.

Barber (’26) caught 79-passes a year ago for 1,327-yards receiving and 22-TDs. Barber scored 138-points in ’24 averaging 9.2-points scored per game.

That is major, major down field production. Barber will vie for “Mr. Football” along with several other of his 5A compatriots.

Jaxen Smith (’26) will insure opposing defenses don’t overly focus on Barber. Smith caught 48-balls in ’24 for 700-yards and 11-TDs. If Smith were playing for any team other than Bowling Green, he would be the marquee guy split out wide.

The kicking game lost Braden Widener to graduation. Widener converted on 98.5% of his PATs (67/68) and knocked through nine of 14 FG attempts.

Widener scored 94-points a year ago and he will be sorely missed. Kale Phelps looks to inherit the job.

Phelps, ’28 PK, was perfect on PATs making both of his attempts. Sure, that is a limited sample size; but, it could have been worse. He might have missed them both instead.

Montez Trussell (’26) returns and he is among the more devastating defenders in the KHSAA. Trussell registered 121-tackles, 27.5 TFLs, and 16-sacks in ’24.

Malik Coburn is a classmate of Trussell (’26) and he is nearly as devastating. Coburn registered 92-tackles, 19.5 TFLs, and nine and a half sacks (9.5).

If you are looking for a young gun to keep an eye on, may we suggest Kyle Sledge (’28). The Sledge-Hammer (couldn’t resist) registered 31-tackles over his freshman year playing 5A ball for the classification’s premier program.

Sledge-Hammer also picked three (3) passes and accumulated 45-IRNYs. Arlando Jones (’27) and Miles Richey (’27) each had an INT a piece getting varsity PT along the

Purples’ third level.

It kind of boils down to Cooper has an established superstar at both QB and RB returning in ’25. Deuce Bailey is gone and Jaxen Smith hasn’t shone, to date, he is quite a Keagan Maher.

That and that alone is why we picked Cooper and BG in that order instead of the reverse. We literally went back and forth on these two.

**No. 3 Atherton High**

’24 Record: 10-3, lost to Bowling Green in the regional championship

This biggest news this offseason for The Big A-Train was the transfer of Garyon Hobbs to Atherton from Christian Academy Louisville (CAL). We usually don’t discuss transfers but we have heard Hobbs has been cleared for play.

Hobbs has been ranked as high as the number two (2) overall football prospect in Kentucky in the ’27 class by On3.com. The 6’1,” 220-pounder is listed as an “Athlete” by the service. Talk about your accurate descriptions.

Last year at CAL, in helping the Centurions win the 3A title, Hobbs gained close to 400-yards rushing and scored a pair of TDs. Hobbs caught 16-passes for 184-yards and three scores.

On defense, Hobbs registered 79-tackles, 13-TFLs, a sack, and picked three (3) passes including 83-IRNYs and a “pick-six.” That isn’t shabby.

Atherton will have some pieces to plug in along with Hobbs when the season arrives. Deairus Smith is a ’27 and will be back to run the offense. He threw for close to a 1,000-yards and 12-TDs last year.

For what this prospect lacks in flash and pizzaz, he makes up for with heady play. Smith is a winner and gets his team in the “right play.”

Du Zye Grundy will try to fill the huge shoes of Michael Curry’s graduation. Grundy gained 669-yards and scored 8-rushing TDs in only 64-carries a year ago. Grundy also had 31-tackles, 5-TFLs, and 4-sacks.

Aiden Wilson (’27) returns at WR. Wilson

caught 35-balls in ’24 for 608-yards and 3-TDs. On defense Wilson picked a pair of passes, including a “pick-six” while also accumulating 75-IRNYs.

Bruce Leisten converted over 70% of his PATS in ’24, converting 31 of 44. Leisten is a ’27 guy who is off to a good start and has plenty of time to further develop.

Donee Sutton had 85-tackles and 9-TFLs with three (3) sacks in ’24. James Allen Briscoe picked 4-passes for 78-IRNYs and a pick-six in ’24. The ’26 prospect also chipped in 42-tackles, a TFL, and a FF.

As for coaching, Anthony “Nino” White has done an incredible job reinvigorating the football fortunes of The Big A-Train, including branding Atherton football as “The Big A-Train.”

Getting players like Hobbs to come over from CAL is an indication of the “buy-in” into the program of top-flight, Derby City football playing talent. Over the past two years, Atherton is 21-5.

Can you believe it? Well, you better get to believing. The Big A-Train is pulling into your station with plenty of talent to compete for championships.

**No. 4 Owensboro Senior High**

No. 4 Owensboro Senior High

’24 Record: 8-4, Lost to BG, at home, in RD Two

Jay Fallin stepped down at the end of the year and DaMarcus Ganaway has taken the reigns. Ganaway is a former All-American receiver at Kentucky Wesleyan and played a couple years in the league (NFL).

The first thing Ganaway will have to do is replace Trevor Delacey at QB. He will turn to a pair of underclassmen, both of whom are talented. Ty Ashley (’27) threw a TD pass in ’24 as did Zeke Beehn (’28). Both of these guys have talent and lack experience so it will be interesting to see who can be brought around for this Fall.

Ashley plays defense and was the leading tackler a season ago. Ashley registered

116-stops, five (5) TFLs, three (3) sacks, and a FR.

Evan Hampton may be the best RB in Kentucky and a bone fide “Mr. Football” candidate who has committed to Louisville. Hampton gained 1,549-yards in ’24 and scored 20-rushing TDs. Hampton caught four TD passes, led the team in scoring (148-points), and played a little “spot defense” where he registered a hand full of tackles.

Kingston Dillard (’28) is a sure-thing, bone fide, Friday Night star. Dillard caught 41-passes, for close to 600-yards, with four (4) TDs as only a freshman. Dillard also registered 11-tackles.

Romar Payne graduated and that will hurt. Payne converted 46-PATs and four of his five FGs. Hard to find a PK any better than that at the HS level.

Omarian Tee Green (’27) was a monster in ’24 as only a sophomore. Green had 56-tackles, a TFL, but forced five (5) fumbles, recovering four (4).

Guess what? Green also picked a pair of passes and accumulated 75-IRNYs. Green played offense too.

Green gained 238-yards on 32-carries, scored six (6) rushing TDs, and caught a TD pass on top of everything else. There seems to be literally nothing this kid can’t do.

Classmate Kalil Shemwell (’27) had a year in ’24. Shemwell picked four (4) passes, housed a “pick six,” and registered 17-tackles.

Now for the Hampton who gets overlooked, Evan Hampton’s brother Elijah Hampton (’26). This kid is a terrific player who reports wherever you wish to deploy him and just excels.

Elijah had 104-tackles, three (3) TFLs, recovered a fumble, picked a pass, carried the football a couple times, and played along the OL, blocking for his twin, for much of the year. This kid can play and is worth a look independent of his being Evan Hampton’s brother.

Here is the bottom line for you fans out there. The Red Devils

will contend. Welcome to the KHSAA. This happens all the time.

The “Red Devils” won eight (8) games a year ago and it wasn’t a particularly good year. Owensboro is used to winning double digit games a season and making deep playoff runs. We expect to see much of the same out of the DaMarcus Ganaway edition as we have grown accustomed to seeing out of teams with Owensboro blazoned across the chest.

**No. 4 Woodford County High (tie)**

’24 Record: 10-2, lost to Highlands in the second round

Woodford County is an excellently coached football team. Hiring Tony McCombs to help with the defense was a really good idea.

High school programs don’t get opportunities to add former NFL players, and one of ECU’s all-timers every day. Dennis Johnson, Woodford’s HFC, being one of UK’s greatest all time DEs would be the perfect guy to appreciate such a pedigree.

Justus Wertzler is out of eligibility. This hurts as he passed for nearly 3,000-yards with 32-TDs a year ago in leading the Yellow Jackets to another 10-win campaign.

The Jackets will be unproven at RB. Darrian Tomlin has talent and youth (’27). Tomin averaged a little over 9-yards a carry in ’24 but in limited opportunities.

Omari Jointer (’27) has big-play potential. Jointer had 10-TDs receiving in ’24 to lead the ball club. Jointer also averaged over 21-yards a reception so he wasn’t getting tossed a ton of slip screens if you catch what I am laying down. Jalen Johnson caught 31-passes in ’24 so he will balance out the edge attack down the field.

Logan Ford gradated and he was a real weapon at PK. Ford made 58 of 59-PATs and nine (9) of 10-FGs. We don’t know whether the Yellow Jackets turn to now as no one not named “Logan Ford” tallied a single point kicking the

see **Top Five (5A),**  
page FB20



see **Top Five (5A)**, continued from page FB19

football in '24. Thurman Wade ('27) looks like he will be a real defensive star for the Jackets. Wade registered 41-tackles, 8-TFLs, a sack, a pair of FRs, 90-FRNYs, and a “scoop and score.” Wyatt Peters is a terror on the back end. Peters ('27) had 57-tackles, half a TFL, three (3) INTs, a FF, and a FR in '24. Christopher Reed, Jr. ('27) housed a “pick-six” from 33-yards out a season ago to go with his 29-stops. This will be a solid ball club. It is a well coached one.

**No. 5 Madisonville-North Hopkins (tie)**

'24 record: 7-4, lost to 5A Champion, BG, in the first round This may be the “surprise team” of the classification. It was down between Owensboro Senior and these guys for the last spot. Why did we go with North Hopkins? Two words: star power! One thing is painfully obvious when North Hopkins comes off the bus. These guys, year in and year out, dress some filthy athletes. I mean it is sick the type of athletic talent Madisonville rosters from year to year. This year doesn't appear to deviate. Kanyon Johnson is playing college ball now. He was an example of athleticism we were discussing. That said, the Maroons have sank or swam on its run-game through the years over its

passing attack. We believe Kirk LaGrange ('26) may get the first chance to fill Johnson's shoes at QB. Make no mistake, LaGrange is a DAWG. Whether he will make a serviceable QB is another question but we like the deployment. If you're a defensive lineman, you may pass rush LaGrange and get your face ripped off. Better be careful back there. LaGrange picked four (4) passes, registered 64-stops, with a pair of TFLs, a sack, and a FR a year ago. That is a mighty big defensive piece to take over to offense and slot at QB. If anyone can do it, it is LaGrange. Markezz Hightower ('26) is the best RB in class 5A if not the entire KHSAA. He has been offered by MTSU and they would prefer me not mention him any further. They would love top sign him and don't want me hurting their chances by “blowing him up.” Hightower gained 1,604-yards and scored 20-rushing TDs last year in 11-games. He caught 15-balls swinging out of the backfield and scored a TD receiving. Markezz led the team in scoring, putting 138-points up on the board, or 12.5 a game. Before we forget, Hightower had an INT on defense he returned 29-yards. Just saying... With Austin Alexander graduated, we like Jayden Travis as perhaps the best TE playing high school football in the 5A classification. Travis is 6'3,” 230-pounds caught 25-passes in a run-first

attack in '24 with three (3) TDs receiving. Travis finished fifth on the team in “scoring.” Travis also was instrumental in a rushing attack which gained over 3,200 yards and scored 42-rushing TDs. Travis accounted for three (3) of the team's 11 TDs through the air. That is approximately 28% production out of that one player. Travis bench presses 250, squats 365, pulls or “deadlifts” 440, and power cleans 280. Strong, powerful, and explosive are lethal combinations for HS TEs. Travis has soft, receptive hands; a thick and long enough frame to effectively work the middle of the defense with considerable advantage, and is fast enough (4.9-second, 40-yard dash) to create match-up problems with opposing defensive coordinators hoping their 2nd line of defense can contain this offensive weapon. As for smarts, how about his 3.6-GPA. Ryder Sandridge ('27) caught 21-balls last season for 321-yards. Sandridge caught three (3) TDs to tie Travis for the team lead as well as forcing a fumble, recovering three (3) fumbles, registering 71-tackles, and picking a pair of passes from his DB post. This is a versatile, multi-phase threat. Noah Mays was a steady hand converting PATs a season ago. Mays had an 80% conversion rate. Skylar Minton is gone and his 130-tackles and

11-sacks will be tough to replace. That being said, Mark McNary ('26) believes he's the man for the job. McNary had six (6) sacks and eight (8) TFLs amongst his 54-tackles a year ago. The team had 26-sacks a year ago. Minton and McNary were 17 of them. Clayton Gunkel ('27) is a talented DB for the Maroons. Gunnel had a pair of kicks in '24 as did classmate Ryder Sandidge. Joseph Gunn ('27) took his one INT to the house. His “pick six” covered 60-yards. Overall this is a seven win team from a season ago which was a play here, play there from nine (9) wins. This team has some really good talent and the right components in place to make a run like it did in 2019. Oh yeah, the running back for the '19 team was also a “Mr. Football” candidate with the surname of “Hightower.”

***Rounding out the top-10***

- 7. South Oldham
  - 8. Graves County
  - 9. Pulaski County
  - 10. Southwestern
- Beware: Look out for Muhlenberg County. They are excellently coached and have some really nice young players coming up through the ranks. If the Mustangs can keep the talent in-county and in-place, you are looking at a program on a definite “heater!” They may be a year or two away, but they are arriving.

**6A**

**No. 1 Trinigh High (Louisville)**

'24 Record: 13-2; Reining 6A Champions Zane Johnson will be starting his third year at the helm of the mighty Shamrock offense. Johnson is the class of the '27s across the state, especially at QB, and threw for over 2,000-yards a year ago and had a nearly 2:1 touchdown to interception ratio (18-TDs, 10-INTs). Jamaurion Berry gained close to 800-yards in '24. The '27 RB scored 12-rushing TDs and scored another two (2) TDs swinging out of the backfield in pass routes. Berry was the team's leading scorer a

year ago as only a sophomore. Jason Hagan figures to be among Johnson's top downfield targets and he is a '27 like so many other stars on this roster. Hagan caught 23-passes, five (5) of which were for TDs.

Carson Hilbert graduated and that is a big miss for the 'Rocks. Hilbert made 47-PATs and 12-FGs a year ago. It appears Christopher Kehdy ('27) is poised to take over. He was 100% on PATs in '24 (five for five). Carson's little brother Peyton Hilbert ('28) was four (4) for four (4) on PATs so he isn't surrendering the job to Kehdy or anyone else for that matter. Trinity suffered some heavy losses defensively. Bailey Vance, in '24, had 10-TFLs and nine and a half (9.5) sacks but is out of eligibility. Keandre Thompson will lead the defense in '25 and the rising senior ('26) had 12.5-TFLs and five (5) QB-sacks his junior season. Thompson also recovered a fumble.

Look out for Sebastian Blue. Blue, a '27 guy, had seven (7) sacks and a pair of TFLs, forced a pair of fumbles, and recovered one, among his 21-stops in limited action in '24. This kid is flying under the radar but won't be for long. Jahbarri Frost ('26) as superstars go is the worst kept secret in the commonwealth. Frost is 6'2,” 270 and holding offers from Eastern Michigan, Iowa State, and Western Illinois. Frost had over seven TFLs and four sacks a year ago fighting every form of double and triple team the opponent could throw his way.

Myles Howze is another '27 guy who is killing it at Trinity. Howze had five picks in '24 with 66-IRNYs, among his 29-tackles and four and a half (4.5) TFLs. Sonny Bratcher Gray, a '26 DB, also returns and he picked four (4) passes last year. Gray also had 29-stops, three and a half (3.5) TFLs, a QB-sack, and a FR to sort of top it all off his junior year. Over all, this is Louisville Trinity. If history has taught us anything, it has taught us Trinity will be in the title hunt even in

years following way more defections than the ball club experienced last spring to graduation. Like Beechwood, these guys are picked to finish first, preseason, till someone proves to us the 'Rocks can be beaten.

**No. 2 Ryle High**

'24 Record 12-3, State 6A Finalist Mike Engler's Raiders were tough all last season and no one was surprised when they ended the year in Lexington playing for the 6A title. They have some key components back for another tour of duty and should be very stout, yet again. Nathan Verax returns for his senior year and, provided he has a year similar to his junior season, looks to be a solid “Mr. Football” candidate. Verax completed close to 60% of his passing attempts (186/317) and threw 30-TDs against only 12-INTs. Verax threw for close to 2,400-yards while running for another 600 or so and scoring seven (7) TDs rushing. Verax is a dual threat weapon.

Jacob Savage returns and he scored 22-TDs rushing in '24. Savage gained over a thousand yards and caught 29-passes swinging out of the backfield for another four (4) scores. Savage led the team in scoring with 158-points or over 10 a game. Savage is also the team's top defender, something you see very rarely at the 6A level.

Last season, Savage registered 141-tackles, nine and a half (9.5) TFLs, three (3) sacks, and an INT to go along with his offensive numbers. Jacob Savage has a message for you...Nathan Verax isn't the only “Mr. Football” candidate playing for the Raiders. Dylan Lee returns to fill the shoes of the departed Landon Lorms. Lee caught 46-balls in '24 for 608-yards and seven (7) scores. That isn't all Lee did. Lee also picked off six (6) passes and racked up 173 IRNYs and a pick-six along the way. Gavin Moses is back at PK and Moses converted four (4) FGs and 60-PATs for 72-total

see **Top Five (6A)**, page FB21

Hopkins County Central

STORMS

Date	Opponent	Time	H/A
8/22	Caldwell County	7 PM	H
8/29	at Todd Co Central	7 PM	A
9/5	Madisonville-No Hop.	7 PM	H
9/12	at Fort Campbell	7 PM	A
9/19	Kentucky Ctry. Day	7 PM	H
9/26	at Russellville	7 PM	A
10/3	Union County	7 PM	H
10/17	at Webster County	7 PM	A
10/24	at Murray	7 PM	A
10/31	Crittenden County	7 PM	H

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**Top Five (6A),**  
continued from page FB20

points on the board. Moses is a difference maker in the all-important third phase. Mason Clark, '28 PK, may be the heir apparent to Moses. He was two (2) for two (2) on PATs and converted his only FG attempt. This man needs more opportunities. Bo Gay is tough on defense for the Raiders. Gay registered 15-TFLs and nine (9) QB-sacks among his 42-total tackles. The Raiders ain't going no where soon. Engler's crew will challenge again in '25.

**No. 3 Frederick Douglass**

'24 season 9-5, lost to Trinity in the Semis  
There may not be a roster in Kentucky

which has more D-1 talent routinely cycle through its rolls with any more regularity than the Broncos from Frederick Douglass. Nate Mcpeek has built a consistent challenger in Lexington in the KHSAA's largest classification. To our point, the Broncos had a down year in '24 and still made the 6A semis. The Broncos conceivably ended last season the second best team (arguably) in 6A. Jaxon Strautman returns at QB. Strautman ('26) threw for 20-TDs and ran for three (3) more as a junior. He's starting to figure this whole thing out and that is very bad news for the rest of the KHSAA. Dakari Talbert gained close to 850-yards a year ago and scored 11-rushing

TDs and he was only a sophomore ('27). Talbert was the team's second leading receiver out of the backfield and registered a receiving TD to go with his rushing numbers. Talbert scored 72-points last year. Kenoxie "Tay Tay" Allen has a lot of promise. Allen is among the better athletes on the roster. Cionne Conn looks to be a rising star. The '27 defender had 38-tackles, a pair of TFLs, half a sack and forced a fumble as a sophomore. Conn also picked a pair of passes. Tacori Fields is another talented '27 prospect who registered 51-tackles, half a sack, and picked a pass. Look out for cornerback Elijah Ward ('26). He is diminutive, at 5'8," 145,

but he is holding a Louisville offer and is fast as greased lightening.

**No. 4 St. Xavier**

'24 record, 7-5, lost to Ryle in round two  
St. Xavier had what amounted (for that program) to an uncharacteristically poor season a year ago. Kevin Wallace, the Hall of Fame worthy head coach of the Tigers, says he is bowing out at the end of the season. St. Xavier wouldn't dare send him out any other way than in a 6A title hunt. QB Mason Trimble ('26) is returning for his senior year. Trimble threw for 2,300-yards and 21-TDs in '24 as a junior. Trimble also ran for 315-yards and four (4) more scores. Marlon Harbin III


('26) was the leading rusher a year ago and scored 12-TDs on the ground while catching 47-balls for 639 and another 6-scores. Harbin accounted for 1,343-total yards and 18-TDs leading the team with 108-points scored. He played defense too, leading the ball club with three (3) INTs. Lucas Shelton ('26) is returning. Shelton caught 38-passes a year ago. Karsten Busch, 6'3," 223 LB committed to Louisville and is Kentucky's highest regarded LB. Busch ('26) registered 59-tackles, 12-TFLs, and seven (7) sacks in '24. Luka Bentz isn't a bad defender in his own right. He lead the Tigers with 71-tackles, nine (9) TFLs, and three (3) sacks.

Look out for Benjamin Pinkston ('26). Pinkston had 50-tackles, three (3) TFLs, and a pair of QB-sacks all while playing with his hand in the dirt. St. Xavier was a seven win team in '24. However, they lost to Manual by one score and were in most of their games until late in the second half; so, they weren't just any seven win team. Any team coached by Kevin Wallace has a chance. You can bet that, partner!

**No. 5 McCracken County**

'24 record, 6-6, lost to Central Hardin in round two  
We believe in "Jimmies and Joes"

see **Top Five (6A),**  
page FB23



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## CALDWELL COUNTY



Date	Opponent	Time	H/A
8/22	at Hopkins County Cent.	7 pm	A
8/29	Marshall County	7 pm	H
9/5	Union County	7 pm	H
9/12	at Webster County	7 pm	A
9/19	Trigg County	7 pm	H
9/26	Fort Campbell	7 pm	H
10/3	Mayfield	7 pm	H
10/17	Todd County Central	7 pm	H
10/24	at Crittenden County	7 pm	A
10/31	at Murray	7 pm	A



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## CHRISTIAN COUNTY COLONELS



Date	Opponent	Time	H/A
8/23	Clarksville NE (TN)	7 PM	H
8/29	Mayfield	7 PM	H
9/5	McKenzie (TN)	7 PM	H
9/12	Daviess County	7 PM	H
9/26	at Caverna	7 PM	A
10/3	at S Pittsburg (TN)	7 PM	A
10/10	at Henderson County	7 PM	A
10/17	at McCracken County	7 PM	A
10/24	Hopkinsville	7 PM	H
10/31	at Paducah Tilghman	7 PM	A

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## HENDERSON COUNTY COLONELS



Date	Opponent	Time	H/A
8/22	Pulaski County	7 PM	H
9/5	Henry Clay	7 PM	H
9/12	at Gibson Southern	7 PM	A
9/19	Daviess County	7 PM	H
9/26	at Central Hardin	7 PM	A
10/3	at George Rogers Cl.	8 PM	A
10/10	Christian County	7 PM	H
10/17	at Hopkinsville	7 PM	A
10/24	McCracken County	7 PM	H
10/31	at Owensboro	7 PM	A

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## CRITTENDEN COUNTY ROCKETS



Date	Opponent	Time	H/A
8/22	at Marshall County	7 PM	A
8/29	Union County	7 PM	H
9/5	Webster County	7 PM	H
9/12	Union City (TN)	7 PM	H
9/19	at Mayfield	7 PM	A
9/26	at Trigg County	7 PM	A
10/3	Todd County Central	7 PM	H
10/17	at Fort Campbell	7 PM	A
10/24	Caldwell County	7 PM	H
10/31	at Hopkins County Cen	7 PM	A

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**Top Five (6A),**  
continued from page FB21

as far as studying who is likely to do what around the KHSAA. We think this is a year one might see a team come from no where to have a banner season and possibly contend. That team might well come from the first district.

The Mustangs return Maddox O’Neal at QB and the ’26 prospect had quite the junior season. O’Neal threw for nearly 3,000 yards and 41-TDs against 16-INTs.

Sure the 16-picks is a lot. However, a 2.5:1, touchdown to interception ratio, is nothing at which to sneeze. O’Neal picked up over 200 yards rushing so O’Neal can’t be discounted regarding his feet, speed, elusiveness in

the pocket, and overall athleticism.

All three (3) of the Mustangs top rushers are back for another go. Landon Newman, Dawson Hayden, and Kayden Wahl were all juniors in ’24 and gained a combined 1,600 rushing yards and 16-rushing TDs between the three.

Jude Lanier was a freshman (’28) in ’24 and was the ball club’s third leading receiver. He will make tremendous strides and the club will need it. Cooper Falconite and Daivon Dunbar both graduated.

Brock Wilson is a weapon at PK. Wilson, a rising Jr., converted 52-PATs and made all four (4) of his FG attempts. This cat is money in the bank kicking a football through uprights. That will win you ball games, trust me.

Charlie Higdon (’27) understands the concept of “getting downhill.” Higdon had 15-TFLs with five and a half (5.5) QB-sacks in ’24. Higdon forced three (3) fumbles, recovering two (2).

Hunter Neely (’26) added 53-tackles with 4-TFLs. Sam Goodman (’26) had seven (7) stops behind the line of scrimmage.

Keep your eye on Jaxon Schackleford. He is a ’27 DB and registered 67-tackles, four and a half (4.5) TFLs, a sack, a FF, and a pair of FRs.

Schackleford flies around and makes big defensive plays. There is always room on any defense for a guy like that.

Coaching wise, Tyler Brooks has impressed us. Brooks arrived with a pretty barren cupboard left

by his predecessor and has inspired the McCracken squad to exceed expectations.

This team scores a ton of points (438 in 12 games last season). If the Mustangs can stop some people, look out! They may not even have to stop opponents; just slow them down a bit.

*The next five*

6. Male High (Louisville)

7. duPont Manual (Louisville)

8. George Rogers Clark

9. Bullitt East

10. North Hardin

This is Friday Night Fletch, reporting for KPGFootball and KPI Newspaper Group, reminding you to PLAY THROUGH THE WHISTLE!

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HOPKINSVILLE

TIGERS

Date	Opponent	Time	H/A
8/22	Stratford (Nashville)	7 PM	A
8/29	at Madisonville NHop	7 PM	A
9/6	Prosser (Chicago)	2 PM	H
9/12	at Trigg County	7 PM	A
9/19	South Warren	7 PM	H
9/26	at Carterville (IL)	2 PM	A
10/3	McCracken County	7 PM	H
10/17	Henderson County	7 PM	H
10/24	at Christian County	7 PM	A
10/31	WEB DuBois	7 PM	H

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FOOTBALL FEVER

CALDWELL COUNTY

Date	Opponent	Time	H/A
8/22	at Hopkins Co Central	7 PM	A
8/29	Marshall County	7 PM	H
9/5	Union County	7 PM	H
9/12	at Webster County	7 PM	A
9/19	Trigg County	7 PM	H
9/26	Fort Campbell	7 PM	H
10/3	Mayfield	7 PM	H
10/17	Todd County Central	7 PM	H
10/24	at Crittenden County	7 PM	A
10/31	at Murray	7 PM	A

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MCCRACKEN COUNTY

MUSTANGS

Date	Opponent	Time	H/A
8/22	Paducah Tilghman	7 PM	H
8/29	at Logan County	7 PM	A
9/5	Clarksville NE (TN)	7 PM	H
9/12	at Mayfield	7 PM	A
9/19	at Union County	7 PM	A
9/26	Murray	7 PM	H
10/3	at Hopkinsville	7 PM	A
10/17	Christian County	7 PM	A
10/24	at Henderson County	7 PM	A
10/31	at Graves County	7 PM	A

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FORT CAMPBELL

FALCONS

Date	Opponent	Time	H/A
8/22	Northwest TN (at Trigg)	8:30 PM	A
8/29	Clarksville Academy	7 PM	H
9/5	at Fort Knox	7 PM	A
9/12	Hopkins Co Central	7 PM	H
9/19	Todd County Central	7 PM	H
9/26	at Caldwell County	7 PM	A
10/3	Trigg County	7 PM	H
10/10	White Station (TN)	7 PM	H
10/17	Crittenden County	7 PM	H
10/24	at Mayfield	7 PM	A

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## 2025 HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL SCHEDULE

### BALLARD MEMORIAL BOMBERS

DATE	OPPONENT	TIME
AUG. 22	TODD COUNTY CENTRAL	7 P.M.
AUG. 29	JO BYRNS (TENN.)	7 P.M.
SEPT. 5	AT MASSAC COUNTY (ILL.)	7 P.M.
SEPT. 12	AT CALLOWAY COUNTY	7 P.M.
SEPT. 19	CHARLESTON (MO.)	7 P.M.
SEPT. 26	SOUTH FULTON (TENN.)	7 P.M.
OCT. 3	RUSSELLVILLE	7 P.M.
OCT. 17	FULTON COUNTY	7 P.M.
OCT. 24	AT CAVERNA	7 P.M.
OCT. 31	AT MUHLENBERG COUNTY	7 P.M.

### CALDWELL COUNTY TIGERS

DATE	OPPONENT	TIME
AUG. 22	AT HOPKINS COUNTY CENTRAL	7 P.M.
AUG. 29	MARSHALL COUNT	7 P.M.
SEPT. 5	UNION COUNTY	7 P.M.
SEPT. 12	AT WEBSTER COUNTY	7 P.M.
SEPT. 19	TRIGG COUNTY	7 P.M.
SEPT. 26	FORT CAMPBELL	7 P.M.
OCT. 3	MAYFIELD	7 P.M.
OCT. 17	TODD COUNTY CENTRAL	7 P.M.
OCT. 24	AT CRITTENDEN COUNTY	7 P.M.
OCT. 31	AT MURRAY	7 P.M.

### CALLOWAY COUNTY LAKERS

DATE	OPPONENT	TIME
AUG. 22	WEBSTER COUNTY	7 P.M.
AUG. 29	MURRAY	7 P.M.
	(AT MURRAY STATE UNIVERSITY)	
SEPT. 5	AT FULTON COUNTY	7 P.M.
SEPT. 12	BALLARD MEMORIAL	7 P.M.
SEPT. 19	WARREN EAST	7 P.M.
SEPT. 26	AT LOGAN COUNTY	7 P.M.
OCT. 3	AT FRANKLIN-SIMPSON	7 P.M.
OCT. 17	AT ALLEN COUNTY-SCOTTSVILLE	7 P.M.
OCT. 24	PADUCAH TILGHMAN	7 P.M.
OCT. 31	MARSHALL COUNTY	7 P.M.

### CHRISTIAN COUNTY COLONELS

DATE	OPPONENT	TIME
SEPT. 23	CLARKSVILLE NORTHEAST (TENN.)	7 P.M.
AUG. 29	MAYFIELD	7 P.M.
SEPT. 5	MCKENZIE (TENN.)	7 P.M.
SEPT. 12	DAVIESS COUNTY	7 P.M.
SEPT. 26	AT CAVERNA	7 P.M.
OCT. 3	AT SOUTH PITTSBURG (TENN.)	8 P.M.
OCT. 10	AT HENDERSON COUNTY	7 P.M.
OCT. 17	AT MCCrackEN COUNTY	7 P.M.
OCT. 24	HOPKINSVILLE	7 P.M.
OCT. 31	AT PADUCAH TILGHMAN	7 P.M.

### CRITTENDEN COUNTY ROCKETS

DATE	OPPONENT	TIME
AUG. 22	AT MARSHALL COUNTY	7 P.M.
AUG. 29	UNION COUNTY	7 P.M.
SEPT. 5	WEBSTER COUNTY	7 P.M.
SEPT. 12	UNION CITY (TENN.)	7 P.M.
SEPT. 19	AT MAYFIELD	7 P.M.
SEPT. 26	AT TRIGG COUNTY	7 P.M.
OCT. 3	TODD COUNTY CENTRAL	7 P.M.
OCT. 17	AT FORT CAMPBELL	7 P.M.
OCT. 24	CALDWELL COUNTY	7 P.M.
OCT. 31	AT HOPKINS COUNTY CENTRAL	7 P.M.

### FORT CAMPBELL FALCONS

DATE	OPPONENT	TIME
AUG. 22	NORTHWEST (CLARKSVILLE, TENN.)	8:30 P.M.
	(AT TRIGG COUNTY)	
AUG. 29	CLARKSVILLE ACADEMY	7 P.M.
SEPT. 5	AT FORT KNOX	8 P.M.
SEPT. 12	HOPKINS COUNTY CENTRAL	7 P.M.
SEPT. 19	TODD COUNTY CENTRAL	7 P.M.
SEPT. 26	AT CALDWELL COUNTY	7 P.M.
OCT. 3	TRIGG COUNTY	7 P.M.
OCT. 10	WHITE STATION (TENN.)	7 P.M.
OCT. 17	CRITTENDEN COUNTY	7 P.M.
OCT. 24	AT MAYFIELD	7 P.M.

### FULTON COUNTY PILOTS

DATE	OPPONENT	TIME
AUG. 22	GLEASON (TENN.)	7 P.M.
AUG. 29	AT SOUTH FULTON (TENN.)	7 P.M.
SEPT. 5	CALLOWAY COUNTY	7 P.M.
SEPT. 12	TBA	
SEPT. 19	AT GREENFIELD (TENN.)	7 P.M.
SEPT. 26	AT LAKE COUNTY (TENN.)	7 P.M.
OCT. 3	CAVERNA	7 P.M.
OCT. 17	AT BALLARD MEMORIAL	7 P.M.
OCT. 24	AT RUSSELLVILLE	7 P.M.
OCT. 31	TRIGG COUNTY	7 P.M.

### GRAVES COUNTY EAGLES

DATE	OPPONENT	TIME
AUG. 22	AT MAYFIELD	7 P.M.
AUG. 29	PADUCAH TILGHMAN	7 P.M.
SEPT. 5	AT MURRAY	7 P.M.
SEPT. 12	UNION COUNTY	7 P.M.
SEPT. 19	OWENSBORO	7 P.M.
SEPT. 26	AT MADISONVILLE-NORTH HOPKINS	7 P.M.
OCT. 3	AT APOLLO	7 P.M.
OCT. 17	AT MARSHALL COUNTY	7 P.M.
OCT. 24	MUHLNBERG COUNTY	7 P.M.
OCT. 31	MCCRACKEN COUNTY	7 P.M.

### HENDERSON COUNTY COLONELS

DATE	OPPONENT	TIME
AUG. 23	PULASKI COUNTY	7 P.M.
SEPT. 5	HENRY CLAY	7 P.M.
SEPT. 12	AT GIBSON SOUTHERN	7 P.M.
SEPT. 19	DAVIESS COUNTY	7 P.M.
SEPT. 26	AT CENTRAL HARDIN	8 P.M.
OCT. 3	AT GEORGE ROGERS CLARK	8 P.M.
OCT. 10	CHRISTIAN COUNTY	7 P.M.
OCT. 17	AT HOPKINSVILLE	7 P.M.
OCT. 24	MCCRACKEN COUNTY	7 P.M.
OCT. 31	AT OWENSBORO	7 P.M.

### HOPKINS COUNTY CENTRAL STORM

DATE	OPPONENT	TIME
AUG. 22	CALDWELL COUNTY	7 P.M.
AUG. 29	AT TODD COUNTY CENTRAL	7 P.M.
SEPT. 5	MADISONVILLE-NORTH HOPKINS	7 P.M.
SEPT. 12	AT FORT CAMPBELL	7 P.M.
SEPT. 19	KENTUCKY COUNTRY DAY	7 P.M.
SEPT. 26	AT RUSSELLVILLE	7 P.M.
OCT. 3	UNION COUNTY	7 P.M.
OCT. 17	AT WEBSTER COUNTY	7 P.M.
OCT. 24	AT MURRAY	7 P.M.
OCT. 31	CRITTENDEN COUNTY	7 P.M.

### HOPKINSVILLE TIGERS

DATE	OPPONENT	TIME
AUG. 22	STRATFORD (NASHVILLE, TENN.)	7 P.M.
AUG. 29	AT MADISONVILLE-NORTH HOPKINS	7 P.M.
SEPT. 6	PROSSER (CHICAGO, ILL.)	2 P.M.
SEPT. 12	AT TRIGG COUNTY	7 P.M.
SEPT. 19	SOUTH WARREN	7 P.M.
SEPT. 26	AT CARTERSVILLE (ILL.)	7 P.M.
OCT. 3	MCCRACKEN COUNTY	7 P.M.
OCT. 17	HENDERSON COUNTY	7 P.M.
OCT. 24	AT CHRISTIAN COUNTY	7 P.M.
OCT. 31	WEB DUBOIS	7 P.M.

### Madisonville-North Hopkins Maroons

DATE	OPPONENT	TIME
AUG. 22	AT UNION COUNTY	7 P.M.
AUG. 29	HOPKINSVILLE	7 P.M.
SEPT. 5	AT HOPKINS COUNTY CENTRAL	7 P.M.
SEPT. 12	PADUCAH TILGHMAN	7 P.M.
SEPT. 19	AT MARSHALL COUNTY	7 P.M.
SEPT. 26	GRAVES COUNTY	7 P.M.
OCT. 2	AT MUHLNBERG COUNTY	7 P.M.
OCT. 17	APOLLO	7 P.M.
OCT. 24	OWENSBORO	7 P.M.
OCT. 31	AT WARREN CENTRAL	7:30 P.M.

### MARSHALL COUNTY MARSHALS

DATE	OPPONENT	TIME
AUG. 22	CRITTENDEN COUNTY	7 P.M.
AUG. 29	AT CALDWELL COUNTY	7 P.M.
SEPT. 5	AT TRIGG COUNTY	7 P.M.
SEPT. 12	AT MURRAY	7 P.M.
SEPT. 19	MADISONVILLE-NORTH HOPKINS	7 P.M.
SEPT. 26	AT MUHLNBERG COUNTY	7 P.M.
OCT. 3	AT OWENSBORO	7 P.M.
OCT. 17	GRAVES COUNTY	7 P.M.
OCT. 24	APOLLO	7 P.M.
OCT. 31	AT CALLOWAY COUNTY	7 P.M.

### MAYFIELD CARDINALS

DATE	OPPONENT	TIME
AUG. 22	GRAVES COUNTY	7 P.M.
AUG. 19	AT CHRISTIAN COUNTY	7 P.M.
SEPT. 5	AT PADUCAH TILGHMAN	7 P.M.
SEPT. 12	MCCRACKEN COUNTY	7 P.M.
SEPT. 19	CRITTENDEN COUNTY	7 P.M.
SEPT. 26	AT TODD COUNTY CENTRAL	7 P.M.
OCT. 3	AT CALDWELL COUNTY	7 P.M.
OCT. 17	AT TRIGG COUNTY	7 P.M.
OCT. 24	FORT CAMPBELL	7 P.M.
OCT. 31	CENTRAL	7 P.M.

### MCCRACKEN COUNTY MUSTANGS

DATE	OPPONENT	TIME
AUG. 22	PADUCAH TILGHMAN	7 P.M.
AUG. 29	AT LOGAN COUNTY	7 P.M.
SEPT. 5	CLARKSVILLE NORTHEAST (TENN.)	7 P.M.
SEPT. 12	AT MAYFIELD	7 P.M.
SEPT. 19	AT UNION COUNTY	7 P.M.
SEPT. 26	MURRAY	7 P.M.
OCT. 3	AT HOPKINSVILLE	7 P.M.
OCT. 17	CHRISTIAN COUNTY	7 P.M.
OCT. 24	AT HENDERSON COUNTY	7 P.M.
OCT. 31	AT GRAVES COUNTY	7 P.M.

### MURRAY TIGERS

DATE	OPPONENT	TIME
AUG. 22	AT APOLLO	7 P.M.
AUG. 29	CALLOWAY COUNTY	7 P.M.
	(AT MURRAY STATE UNIVERSITY)	
SEPT. 5	GRAVES COUNTY	7 P.M.
SEPT. 12	MARSHALL COUNTY	7 P.M.
SEPT. 19	AT RUSSELLVILLE	7 P.M.
SEPT. 26	AT MCCrackEN COUNTY	7 P.M.
OCT. 3	AT WEBSTER COUNTY	7 P.M.
OCT. 17	AT UNION COUNTY	7 P.M.
OCT. 24	HOPKINS COUNTY CENTRAL	7 P.M.
OCT. 31	CALDWELL COUNTY	7 P.M.

### PADUCAH TILGHMAN BLUE TORNADO

DATE	OPPONENT	TIME
AUG. 22	AT MCCrackEN COUNTY	7 P.M.
AUG. 29	AT GRAVES COUNTY	7 P.M.
SEPT. 5	MAYFIELD	7 P.M.
SEPT. 12	AT MADISONVILLE-NORTH HOPKINS	7 P.M.
SEPT. 19	FRANKLIN-SIMPSON	7 P.M.
SEPT. 26	ALLEN COUNTY-SCOTTSVILLE	7 P.M.
OCT. 3	LOGAN COUNTY	7 P.M.
OCT. 17	AT WARREN EAST	7 P.M.
OCT. 24	AT CALLOWAY COUNTY	7 P.M.
OCT. 31	CHRISTIAN COUNTY	7 P.M.

### TODD COUNTY CENTRAL REBELS

DATE	OPPONENT	TIME
AUG. 22	AT BALLARD MEMORIAL	7 P.M.
AUG. 29	HOPKINS COUNTY CENTRAL	7 P.M.
SEPT. 5	AT BUTLER COUNTY	7 P.M.
SEPT. 12	JO BYRNS (TENN.)	7 P.M.
SEPT. 19	AT FORT CAMPBELL	7 P.M.
SEPT. 26	MAYFIELD	7 P.M.
OCT. 3	AT CRITTENDEN COUNTY	7 P.M.
OCT. 17	AT CALDWELL COUNTY	7 P.M.
OCT. 24	TRIGG COUNTY	7 P.M.
OCT. 31	WEBSTER COUNTY	7 P.M.

### TRIGG COUNTY WILDCATS

DATE	OPPONENT	TIME
AUG. 22	OHIO COUNTY	6 P.M.
AUG. 29	HART COUNTY	7 P.M.
SEPT. 5	MARSHALL COUNTY	7 P.M.
SEPT. 12	HOPKINSVILLE	7 P.M.
SEPT. 19	AT CALDWELL COUNTY	7 P.M.
SEPT. 26	CRITTENDEN COUNTY	7 P.M.
OCT. 3	AT FORT CAMPBELL	7 P.M.
OCT. 17	MAYFIELD	7 P.M.
OCT. 24	AT TODD COUNTY CENTRAL	7 P.M.
OCT. 31	AT FULTON COUNTY	7 P.M.

### UNION COUNTY BRAVES

DATE	OPPONENT	TIME
AUG. 22	MADISONVILLE-NORTH HOPKINS	7 P.M.
AUG. 29	AT CRITTENDEN COUNTY	7 P.M.
SEPT. 5	AT CALDWELL COUNTY	7 P.M.
SEPT. 12	AT GRAVES COUNTY	7 P.M.
SEPT. 19	MCCRACKEN COUNTY	7 P.M.
SEPT. 26	HANCOCK COUNTY	7 P.M.
OCT. 3	AT HOPKINS COUNTY CENTRAL	7 P.M.
OCT. 17	MURRAY	7 P.M.
OCT. 24	WEBSTER COUNTY	7 P.M.
OCT. 31	AT GREENWOOD	7 P.M.

### WEBSTER COUNTY TROJANS

DATE	OPPONENT	TIME
AUG. 22	AT CALLOWAY COUNTY	7 P.M.
AUG. 29	MUHLNBERG COUNTY	7 P.M.
SEPT. 5	AT CRITTENDEN COUNTY	7 P.M.
SEPT. 12	CALDWELL COUNTY	7 P.M.
SEPT. 19	MCLEAN COUNTY	7 P.M.
SEPT. 26	AT OHIO COUNTY	7 P.M.
OCT. 3	MURRAY	7 P.M.
OCT. 17	HOPKINS COUNTY CENTRAL	7 P.M.
OCT. 24	AT UNION COUNTY	7 P.M.
OCT. 31	AT TODD COUNTY CENTRAL	7 P.M.



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