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HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL PREVIEW
2023





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Many new head coaching faces

But Courtney's 28th, for 16th PureMagic HWWW season

In terms of PureMagic-How the West Was Won glory under the Farragutpress banner, head coach Dave Meske ended what he started at Webb School of Knoxville.

This annual award for local high school football's best regular season record began in 2008 with a three-year sweep by Meske's Spartans.

The coach and his last Webb team came full circle in 2022, winning the program's fourth PureMagic-HWWW contest championship — perfect 10-0 record — upon Meske's retirement in Spartans Country after 38 seasons. Overall, he captured six state titles along with numerous other seasons ending with top finishes.

With PureMagic beginning its 16th season of sponsoring this contest, new coach Don Mahoney will look to lead Webb to a fifth best-record championship — and keep the Stetson Hat HWWW traveling trophy at the school — while tying Christian Academy of Knoxville's all-time leading mark of five.

From a monetary standpoint, the winning program will be \$1,000 richer — \$500 each from PureMagic and Farragutpress.

Other new coaches

Also assuming the role of athletic director, Mahoney is one of three new coaches among PM-HWWW's six Farragut-area competing teams seeking a best regular-season record finish — actually four new skippers if you count a rare situation at Knoxville Catholic.

With the sudden resignation of new Irish head coach Dean Cokinos in July, assistant coaches Steve Matthews and Philip Shadowens will assume co-head-coaching duties in 2023. Mat-

thews returned to the program as offensive coordinator this season after having led KCHS to a pair of Division I-Class 4A state crowns in 2015 and 2017 as head coach.

The Irish have captured three PureMagic-HWWW honors (2013, 2014 and 2016).

While CAK looks to pad its all-time lead in Stetson Hat possessions (2011, 2012 and 2020-22), the Warriors would do so under under a new head coach as well: Chad Speck also has assumed the duties of athletic director.

Courtney's 28th

The only head coach with at least two full years at his school — and with Farragut's Eddie Courtney you can multiply that number by 14 — Courtney's 28th season as Admirals skipper also marks his 44th year coaching and teaching at the school.

Seeking for a fourth PM-How the West Was Won crown to go with his 2016 Class 5A state championship trophy, Courtney's teams earned this best-record honor in 2015, 2017 and 2018.

Breaking through?

Meanwhile, a pair of second-year head coaches at their respective schools will look to bring Hardin Valley Academy (led by Jeff Miner) or Bearden (led by Josh Jones) its first PureMagic HWWW title.

Rooney roots

With a passion for following and supporting Knox metro-area high school football, PureMagic CEO Jim Rooney — company co-founder with wife, Teri Rooney — jumped on board with the contest's sponsorship in 2008, giving these six West Knox County schools a way to compete without having to play each other in a round-robin format.

"We have been an ardent sponsor, and long-term sponsor, of How the West Was Won and high school football," he said.

~ Alan Sloan



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Good Luck to all of our **How the West Was Won teams** in 2023

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FARRAGUT HIGH SCHOOL

ADMIRALS

For longtime Farragut High School football coach Eddie Courtney, the obstacles are always the same: he puts together one of the most difficult schedules in the area every year.

“In the season you have 10 interviews, and your work is not only on our game film, it’s on all of our opponents’ film, too,” said Courtney, who has roamed the sidelines as the Admirals’ head coach since 1996. “Our goals are always the same.”



Courtney

Finishing 9-3 in 2022 while winning a share of the Region 2-6A title (4-1), Farragut opens its 2023 campaign Friday, Aug. 18, in the friendly confines named for the coach, Eddie Courtney Stadium. The Ads take on a former nemesis, and once a regular non-district foe, Kingsport Dobyns-Bennett (8-3 in 2022).

In Week 2 Aug. 25, FHS will host Powell — 2021 Class 5A state champs before reaching the state quarterfinals last season.

Next up, on the road, is yearly non-region rival Knoxville West, defending Class 5A state champions. Perennial power Maryville and always pesky arch-rival Bearden are both on the road. Bradley Central and non-region rival Oak Ridge, both to be played on FHS’s Bill Clabo Field, won’t be easy.

“I want to play against the best, coach against the best,” Courtney said. “That prepares us for the playoffs, and when you get to the playoffs, those are the teams that you’re going to see.”

“Coach Courtney always has us play a tough schedule, and that gets us ready for the playoffs,” said senior stand-out linebacker Jack Alley, who is expected to “quarterback” the defense leadership-wise. “It really prepares us and we have to come together as a team.”

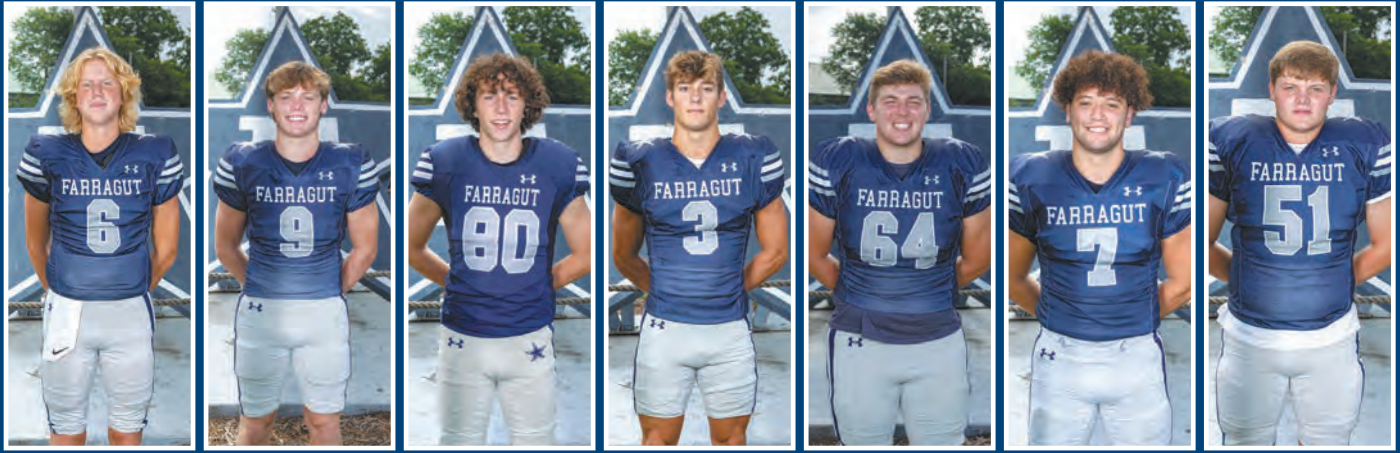
Team breakdown

The 2023 Farragut roster has plenty of familiar faces at many spots on the field — except the backfields.

“We have a lot of experience at wide receiver ... our strengths will be at running back and with our linebackers,” the coach said. “We’ll also have experience on the offensive and defensive line.”

As for Alley, who has committed to accepting an appoint-

See **ADMIRALS PREVIEW** on Page 16



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Noah Gunter



Jayden Davis



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Matt Purvis



Porter Cherry



Davis Smith

2023 ADMIRALS SENIORS



Roger McNeer



Nathan Freeman



Madden Moshier



Jett Pieper



Nathan Harville



Avrey Mohr



Eli Gentry



Brooks Burnette



Caleb Doubleday



Landon Mohr



Luke Hill

Farragut seniors
not pictured:

Landis Davila
Matt Heflin
Naao'l Kerro

"I want to play against the best, coach against the best. That prepares us for the playoffs, and when you get to the playoffs, those are the teams that you're going to see."

~ Coach Eddie Courtney



ADMIRALS FOOTBALL ROSTER

1 Robbie Jacobs11WR/FS	31 Danny Orrico12FS	59 Jett Pieper12DL
2 Wyatt Drummy12RB/LB	32 Logan Fink12CB	60 Nathan Harville12OL
3 Troy Lockhart12RB/FS	33 Layne Cortez10RB	62 Will Szucs10OL
5 Landis Davila12WR/CB	34 David Broda12LB	63 Ayden Perez10OL
6 Cam Duncan12QB	35 Fletcher Haddad10LB	64 Avrey Mohr12OL/DL
7 Jack Alley12TE/LB	36 Stephen Doubleday10LB	65 Chris JarDET10OL/DL
8 Bryce Thompson11RB/LB	37 Ryan McCue10P/PK	66 Isaiah Stafford-Hedge11OL
9 Jordan Sheppard12WR/CB	38 Liam Moeller10CB	67 M.J. Keener10OL
10 Max Garfield10WR/CB	39 Cooper Sandidge10WR	70 Michael Ullian10OL
11 Landon Collins11WR/FS	40 Matt Purvis12DL	71 Jacob Cabrera11OL/DL
12 Noah Gunter12TE/LB	41 Matt Heflin12OLB	73 Connor Frynkewicz10OL
14 Owen Petoskey10QB/LB	42 Jackson Plumlee10OLB	79 Eli Gentry12OL
15 Kent Carbaugh11QB/SS	43 Henry Dee11FS	80 Brooks Burnette12DE
16 Noah Haag10QB	44 Moses Burnette10TE	81 Andrew Griffith10WR/SS
17 Garrett Light11TE/SS	45 Porter Cherry12LB	83 Mahmoud Farah10WR
18 Gage Kirby10QB	46 Max Robertson10LB	84 Johanan Davis10WR
20 Brayden Anderson11WR/DB	48 Hunter Bolen10OLB	85 Caleb Doubleday12SS
21 Jayden Davis12CB	49 Cody Pinkston11LB	86 Ernie Rodriguez10FS
22 Zach Taylor10WR	50 Luca Hofer10DL	87 Grady Brown11OLB
23 Tyler Martin10WR/SS	51 Davis Smith12OL/DL	88 Harrison Kilpatrick11OLB
24 Charlie Noble10RB/CB	52 Bryson Bassett10DL	89 Landon Mohr12WR
25 Owen Shuster12WR	53 Roger McNeer12OL/LS	90 Bladen Todd10CB
26 Jonathan Higdon11CB	54 Nathan Freeman12OL	91 Isaiah Hill10CB
27 Zain Kureshi-Smith10WR/CB	55 Aiden Waters11DL	93 Ethan Daut10WR
28 Jarrod Atkins10FS	56 Naa'o'l Kerro12OL/DL	94 Quin Coleman11CB
29 John Haskins10SS	57 Christian Campbell11OL/LS	96 Isaiah Fontenot11DL
30 Kealan Winter10LB	58 Madden Moshier12	97 Luke Hill12DL

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“Coach Courtney always has us play a tough schedule... It really prepares us and we have to come together as a team,”

~ Linebacker Jack Alley

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2023 ADMIRALS CHEERLEADERS



Photo courtesy of Carlos Reveiz/crfoto.com

Farragut High School football cheerleaders for 2023-24. Front row, from left, are seniors Rachel Drummond, Mackenna Pease (captain), Olivia Karich and Kate Bruce. Middle row, from left, are sophomores Graison Halouma and Julia Daurity; juniors Madi Lakel, Harper King, Bradyn Johnson, Loryn Good, Nicole Kulisek and Carsyn Arden; and sophomores Ella Shuster and Laura Guinn. Back Row, from left, is coach Dana Jacobs; freshmen Ava Kincaid, Caity Penn, Emelia Bellmore, Madyn Williams, Camden Kraemer, Natalie Borton, Ellison Wilson, Khloe Capps and Kinley Bothman; and coach Kara Smith.

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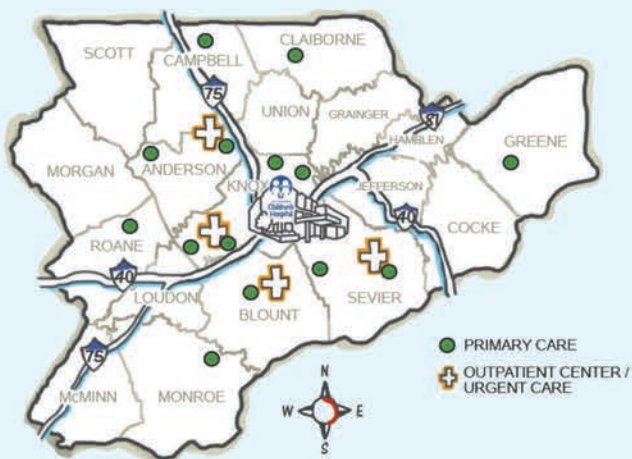
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Admirals Preview

From page 8

ment to the Air Force Academy, “We expect great leadership, as well as performance. ... Guys on the football team follow his example,” Courtney said about the senior. “He can make tackles from sideline-to-sideline, he really can. He has great instincts, reads the (opponents’) ball (movement) well and (knows) his keys — and he’s able to make open-field tackles.”

Alley will have capable help in the middle with senior linebacker David Broda. Junior Bryce Thompson will see lots of action inside also.

On the front defensively, Courtney pointed to senior Matt Purvis at defensive tackle. “We expect him to anchor things in there,” the coach said. Also in the trenches is senior Jett Pieper. Senior Naao’l Kerro is a key player at defensive end.

About the secondary, “That’s a concern right now because we lost three pretty good guys,” the coach said. “But we feel like we’ve got some athletes over there.”

Junior Robbie Jacobs will step in at one cornerback spot, with sophomore Zain Kureshi-Smith at the other corner. Landis Davila, one of the Admirals’ top go-to receivers, will be a two-way man and play free safety. The same is true for junior Landon Collins, another key offensive target, who will play the outside linebacker/ cornerback hybrid spot. Junior Kent Carbaugh has the same duties on the opposite side of Collins.

Four Admirals seniors along the offensive line “have got a lot of experience and they’ve had a great fall camp,” Courtney said, especially center Roger McNeer and right guard Nathan Harville. Along with left tackle Avrey Mohr and right tackle Davis Smith, “We’re counting on them to be leaders on the offense,” the coach said. The new left guard is junior Jacob Cabrera.

Throwing to Davila, Collins and senior wideout Jordan Sheppard will be first-time starter Cam Duncan, also a senior. Sophomore Noah Haag is the back-up.

“We like both of our tight ends,” Courtney said about his “H-back” seniors Noah Gunter and Brooks Burnette.

“We might even go to a two tight-end set.”

Sophomore Charlie Noble and senior Troy Lockhart are expected to carry most of the load running-wise. Starting fullback looks to be senior Wyatt Drummy. “We’ve got guys there with great speed and guys with great balance,” the coach said. “... We feel like we’ve got some depth there.”

Special teams, concerns

Ryan McCue, a sophomore, looks to handle both the placekicking and punting duties for Farragut.

As for other concerns, “We’ll have to continue to build depth, but we do that by having a 10-game JV schedule every year — and we’re one of the few teams that do that,” Courtney said.

~ By Ken Lay

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ADMIRALS

FARRAGUT HIGH SCHOOL 2023 SCHEDULE

Date	Opponent
Aug. 18	Kingsport Dobyys-Bennett
Aug. 25.....	Powell
Sept. 1.....	@ West
Sept. 8.....	(Homecoming).....Cleveland*
Sept. 21.....	@ Bearden* (Thursday)
Sept. 29.....	Bradley Central*
Oct. 6.....	Oak Ridge
Oct. 12.....	Jefferson County (Thursday)
Oct. 20	@ Hardin Valley Academy*
Oct. 27	@ Maryville*

* Denotes Region 2-6A game

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2023
**ADMIRALS
DANCE
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Farragut High School dance team for 2023-24. Back row, from left, are sophomores Cassidy Stickley, Natalie Mahoney, Mary Aspin Scott and Drew Patterson, and junior Sadie LaFrance. Middle Row, from left, are junior Mary Elizabeth Noble, senior Whitney Gohn, and juniors Addison Fink and Makenna McDonald. Front row, from left, are freshmen Caroline Seagraves, Sadie Floyd, Sydney Derr, Lydia Finnegan and Piper Belcher. Head coach (not pictured) is Macy Brink.

Photo courtesy of Ally Robinson Photography



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BEARDEN HIGH SCHOOL

BULLDOGS

Despite opening its season facing three defending state champions — Knoxville West, Alcoa and Anderson County — “I promise you this: Bearden football is going to be much better in 2023 than it was in 2022.”

This quote is from the main Bulldog himself, second year BHS head coach Josh Jones, whose first team finished 7-5 in 2022, including a 14-6 win at Kingsport Dobyns-Bennett in the opening-round of the TSSAA Division I Class 6A playoffs before losing at perennial power Maryville.

Saying his team has “about half our starters back,” Jones said improvement started off the field.

“Our coaches that run the weight room had a pretty good, pretty intense plan for the offseason,” the coach said. “... We didn’t have to beg them to work ... because our team culture right now is about as good as I’ve ever been around, and those guys show up every single day.

“We’re very demanding of our players,” Jones added. “We coach them really hard and they just accept it and keep rolling.

“So I’m excited to see all these guys hard work. I’m



Jones

excited to see it pay off here in a few weeks when we get on the field.”

Top units

About top units offensively, “That’s hard to say,” Jones said. “We feel really good about our running backs. We feel really good about our receivers. Our quarterback (junior three-year starter Drew Parrott) has grown immensely, and even though we lost four starters on the offensive line, we feel we’re in really good shape with the five that we plan to start.”

Defensively, “We returned four or five starters in the secondary,” Jones said.

Top players, defense

“We feel we’re in really good shape there at secondary with Chad Smith at corner,” the coach said. “Ethan Couvertiere has really, really come on.

“We got Sam (Tummins) back there at free safety. Keshawn Mills will play some safety,” Jones added. “We’ve got Kai Young, and Cody Clough will play some safety for us as well. They’re both returning starters. Do a great job.

“Those guys are hard to throw against every day in practice.”

Tummins, a defensive starter since roughly midway into his freshman season, should be a major presence on both sides of the ball: safety on defense and wide receiver on offense.

See **BULLDOGS PREVIEW** on Page 26

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Braden Buchanan



Kai Young

2023 BULLDOGS SENIORS



Dane Palmer



Jack Downey



Joe Scott



Ethan Champlin



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Trevor Myers

Bearden seniors not pictured:
Ayden Ambrose and Tryus Gibson

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BULLDOGS FOOTBALL ROSTER

1 Sam Tummins12WR/DB	26 Ethan Myers11CB	55 Brody Smith10OL
2 Tory Beaufort10WR	27 Kai Young12SAF	57 Isaiah Cobb9OL
3 Jaheim Merriweather12RB/DB	28 Marco Shahbas10DB/RB	58 Karnell Mills9OL
4 Chaston Smith10CB	29 Brooklyn Bombardo10RB	60 Isaiah Harvey11OL
5 Drew Parrott11QB	30 Liam Power10LB	61 Ben Shaw9OL
6 Jayzon Thompson10RB	31 Parker Boyd11SAF	65 Seth Henry10DL
7 Cody Clough12SAF	32 Yashan Campbell10DB	72 Joe Scott12OL
8 Rocky Brown10LB	33 Connor Parris10SAF	74 Steven Herman10OL
9 Kai Ironside11RB/LB	34 Ayden Ambrose12RB	75 Boston Yeager11OL
10 Braden Perkins12WR	35 Demarcus Jones10DB	76 Ethan Champlin12OL
11 Ross Elder12LB	36 Crew Young10DB	77 Reid Rowland11OL
12 Madden Guffey10QB	38 Tryus Gibson12CB	81 Jordan Gutierrez10WR
13 Preston Gould12TE	40 Logan Lamont10LB	82 Terry Beaufort9WR
14 Keshawn Mills10WR/SAF	41 Paxton Parrott9RB	83 Chase Ownby12CB
15 Baylor Donald12WR	42 Dane Palmer12WR	84 Preston Huskey10TE
16 Daniel Kinney11K	43 William Pendergrass11SAF	85 Matthew Forbes11WR
17 Andrew Lemons11WR	44 Tra Dennard11DL	86 Gavin Rothermel11LB
18 Braxton Evans12SAF	45 Ashaundae Bowen11RB	88 Jamchael Blair11WR
19 Mugisha Ironside12WR/DB	46 Jackson Galka10WR	89 Keaton Gilbreath11TE
20 Quincy Hodge11LB	47 Jack Downey12K	91 Kaleb Bradley11DL
21 Nick Hodge12WR	48 Jonathan Stanley10LB	92 Perlino Ehpel11DL
22 Torian Riggins11LB/RB	50 Ethan Hill10DL	94 Charlie Smith11LB
23 Braden Buchanan12WR	51 Jack Smiley10LB	95 Jackson Graham12DL
24 Ethan Couvertiere11CB	53 Ton'reon Brazelton10OL	98 Aidan Daspit9DL/OL
25 Grant Cross10WR	54 Jaxson Davis11OL	99 Trevor Myers12DL

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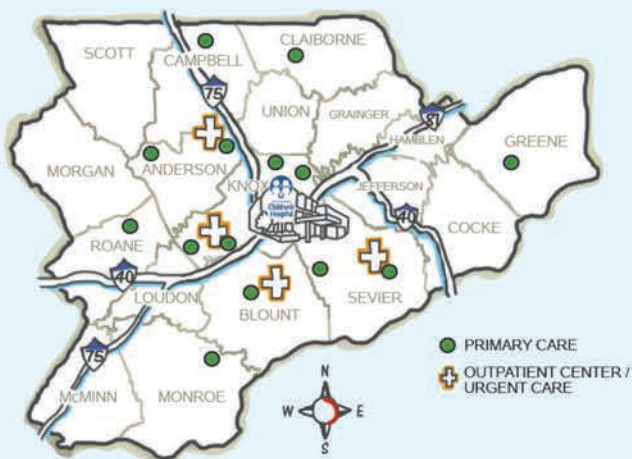
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Pediatrics

Bulldogs Preview

From page 20

“Yeah, well, I feel like I’ve seen the varsity stuff since my freshman year, so I kind of know what’s going on, and so do a lot of our other rising seniors do as well,” the senior said. “So I feel like as a whole, we really just need to be there for our younger guys and just show them the way. So I don’t even really put that all on me. I think all of our seniors take that role.”

Though Bearden “lost three really good linebackers, we feel really good about the three we’re going to replace them with,” Jones said. “We feel they’re very athletic. We feel that they’re just football players.”

Junior Kai Ironside “is going to be a fantastic linebacker,” the coach said about his converted running back.

“I’ll sum up about Kai: Sam Nicaud was our leading tackler, probably our leader of our defense last year,” he added. “Made All-state, was our Region (2-6A) Defensive Player of the Year.”

However, Nicaud went down with an injury early in the Dobyys-Bennett game. “So you’re worried to death; you’re losing your leader, your leading tackler,” the coach added. “Insert Kai Ironside. And I want to say he had 13 tackles that night. So Kai Ironside is one heck of a football player.”

“So we feel really good about our back seven and the defensive line.”

Despite losing “two really good defensive linemen, we started a freshman in our third spot” in 2022, Jones said about sophomore Ethan Hill, a defensive end. “We’re a three down front, and he ... had some growing pains as a freshman last year.”

However, “He’s up to about 225 now; he works his absolute tail off in the weight room. He’s bigger, faster, stronger than he was a year ago,” the coach said added Hill. “Look for him to wreck some habit this year on some offenses.”

Top players, offense

Jones’ offensive scheme “would probably mirror a lot more of a college program than it would, probably, a high school program ... We threw a lot at them (last season), wanted to see what they could handle, could not handle what are we going to be good at and all that?” Jones said.

“They know I’m going to throw a ton on my quarterback, schematic wise, and I’m going to be very demanding of him and his time.”

About Parrott handling those demands, “Drew Parrott has grown so much,” the coach said. “(Last season) I threw a ton at him just to see what he could handle. ... He just battled and kept persevering and everything, and he’s picked up right where we left off.”

A three-sport athlete with a 4.0 grade-point average according to Jones, “We are incredibly demanding of his time, just from on the quarterback side of things,” the coach added about Parrott. “... He never complains. He always wants to get better.

“You can set him down right now and you can rattle off our freaking 50 pass plays it seems like we got, and he can tell you all his assignments on every single one of them.”

“Drew and I have played together since I was in about sixth grade. So, yeah, I’ve always trusted Drew,” Tummins said. “But we’ve never really had a pass-heavy offense until last season. And coach Jones has really taken Drew under his wing and pushed Drew. And I feel like Drew’s gotten beat up a little bit, but I feel like Drew has matured a lot, and I’m really confident in him in finding his connection this year.”

About Tummins as a receiver, “Sam was one of our key receivers last year. He’s one of our only two-way players we have on the team,” Jones said. “But he’s a big factor for us out there at the wideout position. This guy is going to make the tough catch, going to go across the middle. Ain’t afraid.

“Last year our leading receiver in terms of catches was a freshman named Tory Beaufort,” Jones said about the sophomore. “Tory’s a little guy gets overlooked a little bit due to his frame, but the son of a gun can play.

“He’s had a phenomenal spring, an unbelievable summer in our 7-on-7. I don’t know how many touchdowns he’s caught — I ain’t got enough hands and toes to keep up. “But we expect big things,” the coach added. “He’s incredible in space, as good as route runner in the slot as you’re going to find in this area anyway. So expect big things.”

See **BULLDOGS PREVIEW** on Page 27

BEARDEN HIGH SCHOOL 2023 SCHEDULE

BULLDOGS

Date	Opponent
Aug. 19	@ West High School
Aug. 25.....	@ Alcoa High School
Sep. 1	Anderson Co. High School
Sep. 15.....	@ Hardin Valley Academy *
Sep. 21.....	Farragut High School *
Sep. 29.....	@ Maryville High School *
Oct. 6.....	(Homecoming) Cleveland High School *
Oct. 13.....	@ Oak Ridge High School
Oct. 20.....	Morristown West
Oct. 27.....	@ Bradley Central High School *

* Denotes Region 2-6A game



Bulldogs Preview

From page 26

As for key running backs, “Jaheim Merriweather is new. ... learning our expectations and all that,” the coach said about his standout senior transfer running back from Gallatin who has received an offer from Purdue of the Big Ten. “Learning the scheme that for him it new. And we’re excited about Jaheim as well.”

Merriweather said he has big goals. “I want to win (Tennessee) Mr. Football,” the transfer said. “I’ve got good vision, good feet and I’m slippery.”

Jayzon Thompson, a rising sophomore running back, “is going to be special,” Jones said about the West Virginia commitment. “He’ll be a name that you’ll see in a bunch of headlines these next few years. He picked up three Division I offers this spring. Coaches didn’t even know who that was. They show up, watch practice. They’re like, who is that guy?”

Helping to lead the rebuilt offensive, junior Reid Rowland, a 6-foot-3, 275-pound junior, “was a JV guy for us” in 2022, Jones said. “Great kid. We just could not get the mean streak to show up that it takes to play that position this spring.”

However, “Holy cow. I don’t know if he’s drunk gasoline or snake oil or gunpowder or what, but he’s a totally different kid,” Jones added about Rowland. “He is mashing folks. I’m so proud of him and his growth.

“Then we got Brody Smith, who transferred over from Catholic,” the coach added about the 6-foot-5, 250-pound sophomore. “Tennessee offered him a few weeks ago at camp. His

dad played in the NFL. Brody’s playing a brand new position at left tackle, but he’s coming along great. He’s going to be a phenomenal player, just a sophomore.”

“Big” Joe Scott, a 6-foot-5, 330-pound senior, “Just transferred (in June),” Jones said. “He is a mountain of a young man and he’s going to play right tackle for us. We’re really, really excited about him.”

Kicker, punter

Junior Daniel Kinney, who kicked as a freshman, will return to handle place-kicking. “He spent a lot of time this offseason over in Nashville with James Wilhoit, who I think is the best kicking trainer in the state of Tennessee,” Jones said. And Daniel spent a lot of time over there with him this offseason getting better. He’s definitely added some distance to his kickoffs.


Junior punter Will Pendergrass “is absolutely booming the ball right now. ... Will’s worked really hard. He went out and got some offseason training as well. He’s a little bigger than he was last year.”

Concerns, summary

As for concerns, “depth on the line of scrimmage. ... For whatever rhyme or reason, there’s just not as many big kids playing football anymore,” Jones said. “... I talk to coaches all over the country, and everybody tells me the same thing: ‘where’s the big kids at?’”

Overall, “We’re excited,” Jones said. “I don’t know what the scoreboard is going to show with the schedule we play. We play basically all the best teams in the area.”

~ By Alan Sloan



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2023 **BULLDOGS CHEERLEADERS**



Bearden High School cheerleaders for 2023-24. Front row, from left, are seniors Cally Maxwell (co-captain), Anna Grace Lynn (captain), Haley Edgerton (captain), Alyssa Farrell (captain) and Kennedy Crateau (co-captain). Middle row flanking the Bulldog mascot, from left, are seniors Ryleigh Wingo, Savannah Goan, Lily Cupp, Maddy Akin and Allie Reid, and head coach Andrea Kuykendall. Back row, from left, are freshman Lucy Tirgrath and Adelyn Spencer, sophomore Ava Stinnette, junior Cami Burtleson, sophomore Kyra Ramussen, freshmen Annie Whited and Eva Mathews, juniors Lilly Rhea and Ashlyn Hunter, and freshman Emerson Berger.

2023 **BULLDOGS DANCE TEAM**



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Above top, bottom: In its Spring Practice workouts, Bearden worked hard on its running game, which always involves lots of blocking. The Bulldogs' rushing game should have the running back depth to take pressure off of junior quarterback Drew Parrott.

Above middle: Among Parrott's passing targets in 2023 is expected to be junior wideout Matthew Forbes, who concentrates on a long pass from Parrott before hauling in a scrimmage touchdown.



Photo courtesy of Jeremy Wiggs/Jeremy Wiggs Photography

HARDIN VALLEY ACADEMY

HAWKS

Though coming off a 1-9 season in 2022 with a mostly new coaching staff — the Hardin Valley Academy program’s second straight one-win season — “We’re just excited being in year two,” second-year Hawks head coach Jeff Miner said.



Miner

“We’re getting to know them, they’re getting to know us, and now we’ve built relationships,” he added. “They understand our expectations. We know them better and what their strengths and weaknesses are.”

“I think as (2022) went on, you saw things start to work ... and we got better and better. And, of course, we were able to pick up this year where we left off and could move forward from that point.”

As for returning starters, “That’s a tough one for us,” Miner said about figuring out a returning starter number,

with many Hawks having playing/starting experience.

“We had a lot of injuries last year, so we had a lot of guys who ended up starting throughout the year,” he added. “But I would say we probably got seven on both sides of the ball.”

While not singling out one unit, either on offense or defense, as standing out from all others, “I think right now they’re all pretty solid,” the coach said. “I don’t know that I would call one stronger than the other.”

Players on offense

However, “Our whole offensive line is back, so I think anytime that happens, that’s huge,” Miner said. “And when playing that position, you know, experience is such a huge factor in knowing how to play and being successful there.”

Individually, Josh Lay, a senior, “currently is playing tackle for us,” the coach said. Junior Neal Henley “is the guard. Evan Clarke (junior) is playing center for us. The other guard is Holt Lawrence (senior), who missed most of last year ... he got hurt early” in 2022.

As for the other tackle spot, “Dustin Rodriguez (junior)

See **HAWKS PREVIEW** on Page 31

Hawks Preview

From page 30

started and played a lot, and (senior) Scottie Stamey, also.

“So, really, we’ve got six guys who have starting experience and who are figuring in.”

Seniors Caleb Standifer and Jude Hurst “are kind of balling it out” to be the new starting quarterback. “The two guys who started last year at quarterback for us both graduated, and Caleb played a different position.

“But he’s played quarterback in the past, and Jude’s played quarterback for a long time,” Miner added.

As for “weapons” on offense, “a basketball player came out and decided to play this year, Barron Scheetz,” the coach said about the junior tight end. “I think he’s going to be a weapon for us this year.”

Elsewhere at the offense skills positions, “Right now we’ve got five or six guys that are playing running back,” Miner said. “We’ve got three or four guys we feel good about at receiver.”

All-Region 2-6A honoree Pierce Palmer, a senior, should be a major passing target at wide receiver.

“I mean, we’ve got a couple of other guys besides me that can also do a great job at receiver,” Palmer said. “So if I ever need a break or anything like that, I trust them to come in and do a great job as well.”

As for how to attack opposing defenses, “We hope to be balanced” running and throwing, Miner said.

“We’ve spent some time this spring working on the running game, but ... it’s kind of hard to know where we’re at run-game wise,” he added. “But I know we’ve worked extremely hard this June throwing the football, and I feel good about where we’re at now.”

Top defenders

Defensively, “We’ve got three defensive linemen back that played a lot,” Miner said. “We’ve got one guy, linebacker ... that played a ton, and then a couple of other guys who also played.”

At defensive end, “we’ve got (senior) Andrew Beeler and (junior) Michael Stewart at nose (guard) and (senior) Ayden Turner at linebacker right now.

“Of course, we got Tommy Joseph (senior), one of our leading tacklers last year; Kaden Cutcher (junior), who played, and I believe started a game or two on defense, and Brady Hogrefe — these guys are linebackers,” the coach added. “Brady Hogrefe played some different positions last year, but he’s playing linebacker. Barron Scheetz is playing sort of an outside linebacker role for us as well.”

“My role at linebacker is just, I mean, do my job, basically,” said Joseph, a returning All-Region honoree who has “Silent Comment” as a nickname. “If I do my job and everybody else does their job, then I think our defense has a really good job of excelling.

“I can be vocal when I need to, but I wouldn’t call myself a

See **HAWKS PREVIEW** on Page 33

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2023 **HAWKS SENIORS**



Pierce Palmer



Andrew Beeler



Cooper Rittenberry



Brady Miner



Caleb Standifer



Jude Hurst



Tommy Joseph



Brady Hogrefe



Tyler Cash



Adam Blaylock



Brady Loveland



Luke Bronkala



Jacob Wilson



Ayden Turner



Josh Lay



Christian Cerchia

2023 HAWKS SENIORS



Holt Lawrence



Preston Clark



Scottie Stamey

Hawks Preview

From page 31

vocal leader,” the senior linebacker added. “I definitely lead by example.”

In the secondary, “Like I said, we battled some injuries last year,” Miner said. “As a two-way starter, Pierce also will start at a safety spot. Pierce is sort of the quarterback of our secondary.”

A number of Hawks “played in the secondary at one point or another” in 2022, “and some of them didn’t finish the season,” the coach added. “But we’ve got a lot of experience back right now.”

At one cornerback spot is senior Cooper Rittenberry, “who was a safety last year and who missed most of the year last year, but I think he started a game or two,” Miner said.

Senior Adam Blaylock “started several games late and really came on as corner. ...” Senior Brady Minor is the other safety.

“And all those guys I just mentioned, all 11 started at some

point or another” in 2022, the coach said. “All 11 weren’t starting from game one, but all 11 started or played at some point.”

Concerns

“Don’t get me wrong, but we’ve got to be better running the football this year,” Miner said about his concerns. “Defensively, not give up big plays.”

However, as for being fundamentally sound, “I think in all those areas, we have grown and improved dramatically from last year,” the coach said. “And so I think we’re going to be able to run the football this year.

“.. And I think we will do much better not giving up big plays,” Miner added.

Special teams

“We’ve got a heck of a kicker,” Miner said about returning kicker/punter Nathan Holbrook, a junior. “He’s a weapon as a punter. ... When he punts, it sounds like cannon went off.

“... He’ll play college football somewhere as a kicker, he’s got a really strong leg,” the coach added.

~ By Alan Sloan

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HAWKS FOOTBALL ROSTER

1 Michael Stewart11 RB/DL	26 Anthony Angel10 RB/DB	54 Josh Lay12 OL/DL
3 Pierce Palmer12 WR/DB	27 Ryder Dozier11 RB/LB	56 Evan Clarke11 OL/DL
4 Andrew Beeler12 TE/DL	28 RJ Bernardo11 RB/LB	57 Tyler Cash12 OL/DL
5 Cooper Rittenberry12 RB/DB	29 Walt Wrather10 RB/LB	58 Leland Zimmerman11 OL/DL
6 Brody Lamb10 RB/WR/DB	30 Andrew Perkins10 TE/DL	59 Jafaar Al-Goran10 OL/DL
7 Brady Miner12 RB/DB	31 Brandon McClintock11 WR/DB	60 Christian Cerchia12 OL/DL
8 Caleb Standifer12 QB/DB	32 Zain Dharsi10 WR/DB	62 Rocco Pritchard11 OL/DL
9 Jude Hurst12 QB/DB	33 Jaxson King11 TE/LB	63 Jayden Kirby10 OL/DL
11 Tommy Joseph12 TE/LB	34 John Geiger10 TE/DL	64 Jorge Feliciano11 OL/DL
12 Taa Henderson10 WR/DB	35 Samuel Mann10 RB/LB	65 Brady McConville10 OL/DL
13 Brady Hogrefe12 RB/LB	36 Grady Estep11 RB/LB	66 Holt Lawrence12 OL/DL
14 Dylan Umansky10 QB/LB	37 Henry Pascual11 RB/LB	70 Dustin Rodriguez11 OL/DL
16 Isaac Shelby11 WR/DB	38 Riley Caylor10 WR/DB	72 Preston Clark12 OL/DL
17 Adam Blaylock12 RB/DB	40 Kobe Rittenberry10 RB/DL	73 Elijah Kyker10 OL/DL
18 Jayden Sheard11 WR/DB	41 Nathan Holbrook11 TE/LB	77 Scottie Stamey12 OL/DL
19 Shiv Patel11 WR/DB	43 Jacob Wilson12 TE/DL	81 AJ Perez10 WR/DB
20 Barron Scheetz11 TE/DB	44 Brantly Abercrombie10 TE/DL	84 Lucas Nyssen11 WR/DB
22 Brady Loveland12 RB/LB	45 Gavin Ralston10 RB/DB	85 Will Wimer10 TE/LB
23 Kaden Cutcher11 RB/LB	46 Jacob Carter11 RB/LB	86 Garrett Lee10 TE/DL
24 McKayle Hayes11 RB/DB	51 Ayden Turner12 OL/DL	91 Houston Rogers10 TE/DL
25 Luke Bronkala12 RB/DB	52 Neal Henley11 OL/DL	



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“We’re getting to know them, they’re getting to know us, and now we’ve built relationships... They understand our expectations.”

~ Hardin Valley Academy head coach Jeff Miner

2023 HAWKS CHEERLEADERS



Photo courtesy of coach Jessica Dingess

Hardin Valley Academy cheerleaders for 2023-24, front row from left, are Gracie Walters and Mia Holloway, captains Ashlee Ferguson, Emma Johnson and Chanley Nagle, followed by Sarah Benko, Caroline Logan and Brooke Donnachie.

Middle row, from left, are Caryssa Anderson, Lizzie Johnson, Ava Diggs, Audrie Schuster, Lydia Widner and Jenna Brewster.

Back row, from left, are Addie Corum, Taylor Sowko, Annalee Violes, Amia Kelly, Emily Ford, Camilla Morrow, Emma Liles, Lauren Farr and Kassii Gutierrez.

Not pictured are Emily Fletcher and head coach Jessica Dingess.

**Have a great season,
Hawks!**

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Have a Great Season!

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2023 **HAWKS DANCE TEAM**



Hardin Valley Academy dance team for 2023-24. Front row, from left, are seniors Ellie Locke, Lucy Blair and Jackie Pizzi. On the middle row are Trinity Kargbo, left, and Kaitlyn Keim. Back row, from left, are Jovie Raddon, Taelyn Beardsley, Riley Beemer and head coach Kaylee Pulvirenti.

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HARDIN VALLEY ACADEMY 2023 SCHEDULE

Date	Opponent
Aug. 18	Karns
Aug. 24	@ Morristown East <i>(Thursday)</i>
Sept. 1	Cocke County
Sept. 8	@ Knoxville Halls
Sept. 15	Bearden*
Sept. 22	(Homecoming) Maryville*
Sept. 29	@ Sevier County
Oct. 6	@ Bradley Central*
Oct. 13	OPEN
Oct. 20	Farragut*
Oct. 27	@ Cleveland*

** Denotes Region 2-6A game*

HAWKS



Looking to improve a running game Hardin Valley Academy head coach Jeff Miner found disappointing, for the most part, during his first season at HVA in 2022, the Hawks handed the rock to a host of budding breakaway artists during its Spring Practice.

Below: Hawks linemen work hard at both blocking and shedding blocks during a combined offensive-defensive drill. Among the defenders working on reading his proper defensive keys was sophomore Brantly Abercrombie (44), a defensive end, while trying to properly seal off the Hardin Valley defensive interior was sophomore Brady McConville (65), a defensive lineman.





Photo courtesy of Bobby Lewis/Pro Photo

CHRISTIAN ACADEMY OF KNOXVILLE

WARRIORS

Despite a strong start, Christian Academy of Knoxville endured a tough season in 2022, finishing 2-8 while failing to make the playoffs for the first time since 2004.

But the Warriors enter the new campaign with a new head coach and a fresh outlook.

“We have a new coach and we’re not living in the past,” Warriors standout senior quarterback Aiden Troutt said about Chad Speck. “We’re living in the moment and we’re looking toward the future.”

“We have a new coaching staff and we’re beyond excited,” he added. “We’re going to lead others, and we’re going to play for the glory of God, and we’re going to lead with empathy and play for excellence.”

CAK promoted Speck to replace Travis Mozingo as head coach.

Serving as an assistant under Mozingo the previous two seasons coaching wide receivers, Speck also doubles as CAK’s athletic director.

The new head coach is looking to reverse fortunes for the Warriors in rapid fashion. And it starts with simplicity.



Speck

“My biggest expectation is that we continue to build on the culture that we’re trying to establish,” he said. “We just have to trust the process and get better from day to day.”

“If we do that, the wins and losses and everything else will take care of themselves,” he added. “Love is the standard here.”

Top returnees, newcomers

“We have a lot of returners on defense, and our defense should have a chance to stop some people,” Speck said. “Our offense should have the chance to score.”

It’s been a long offseason for CAK, and standout senior lineman Austin Delp is anxious to begin the new season, which will be his final one with the Warriors.

“Everybody looks forward to Friday nights,” said Delp, who will play on both the offensive and defensive lines. “I’m just ready to go out and battle, fight with those guys standing beside me and behind me.”

“Love is the standard and we’ve all made the commitment to be out there, be on time and to fight for each other,” the senior added.

Other top returners for CAK include Sloan Helton (senior, wide receiver/defensive back); Will Kelley (junior, wide receiver/defensive back); Jay Duncan (senior, running back/linebacker); Shepard Gaston (senior, kicker/de-

See **WARRIORS PREVIEW** on Page 42

2023 WARRIORS SENIORS



Sloan Helton



Christopher Cook



Aiden Troutt



Shepard Gaston



JC Blevins



Jay Duncan



Ethan Hankins



Austin Delp



Eli Davis

CAK seniors not pictured: Aiden Davis and Quinton Stone

"Everybody looks forward to Friday nights,"

~ Austin Delp, Senior lineman



WARRIORS FOOTBALL ROSTER

0 Lincoln Rich11 RB/LB	18 JT Williams10 QB / DB	44 Michael Yoakum9 H / TE / DE
1 Sloan Helton12 WR / DB	19 Aiden Davis12 WR / DB	45 Hudson Underwood9 TE/LB
2 Will Kelley11 WR / DB	20 Shepard Gaston12 K / DB	46 Austin Campbell11 LB / TE
3 Alexander Glass11 WR / DB	21 Wesley Butler10 RB / LB	50 Ethan Hankins12 OL / DL
4 Alex Gilmer11 RB / LB	22 Colin Crider10 RB/LB	52 Jax Narancich9 OL / DL
5 Elijah Linkous11 H / LB	23 Quinton Stone12 P / OLB	54 Austin Delp12 OL / DL
6 Eric Moore10 WR / DB	24 Maddox Mozingo11 H / OLB	56 Eli Davis12 OL / DL
7 Christopher Cook12 WR / DB	25 Charlie Myers9 WR / DB	60 Cooper Houser10 OL / DL
8 Jac Phillips11 WR/DB	26 Graham Moffett11 QB / LB	61 Caleb Flatt10 OL / DL
9 Ward Sterchi11 QB / H / LB	27 Bennett Jelks9 WR / DB	64 Andrew Dungan9 OL/DL
10 Kyle Cook10 WR/OLB	28 Teeno Hutchinson10 WR / DB	66 Benton Blevins10 OL / DL
11 Silas Fulford11 OLB	30 JC Blevins12 RB / LB	67 Tucker Darga10 OL / DL
12 Shepard Strange11 QB / OLB	31 Brayden Romines11 RB / LB	72 Zane Fields11 OL / DL
13 Elijah Hoke11 WR / DB	32 Colby Stokely10 K / DE	74 Mason Petersen10 OL / DL
14 Owen Fulford10 WR / DB	34 Godwin Beebe10 RB / DB	75 Nick Poret11 OL / DL
15 Peyton Smith10 ATH	37 Jay Duncan12 RB / LB	78 Brogdon Lundgren10 OL / DL
16 Aiden Troutt12 QB	38 Devin Young9 WR / DB	82 Jude Davis11 RB / DB
17 Gabe Linkous10 WR / DB	39 Isaac Hurley10 WR / DB	



CHRISTIAN ACADEMY OF KNOXVILLE 2023 SCHEDULE

Date	Opponent
Aug. 18	@ Darlington, South Carolina
Aug. 25	@ The Kings Academy
Sept. 1	@ Boyd-Buchanan*
Sept. 8	Grace Christian*
Sept. 15	@ Lakeway Christian*
Sept. 22	Webb School*
Sept. 29	@ Chattanooga Christian*
Oct. 6	@ White County
Oct. 20	Notre Dame*
Oct. 27	Silverdale Baptist*

* Denotes Division II-AA East Region game

WARRIORS

2023 WARRIORS CHEERLEADERS



Christian Academy of Knoxville senior cheerleaders for 2023-24. From left are Madi Brown, Blakely Box, Emma Leigh Lockhart, Avery Williams, Ava Shaw and Ashley Murray. Not pictured is head coach Brooke Cunningham.

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Warriors Preview

From page 38

fensive back); Maddox Mazingo (junior, H-back/linebacker); J C Blevins (senior, running back/linebacker); Alexander Glass (junior, defensive back/wide receiver); Quinton Stone (senior, punter/outside linebacker); and Zane Fields (junior, offensive lineman/defensive lineman).

Key newcomers include Lincoln Rich (junior, running back/linebacker); Alex Gilmer (junior, running back/linebacker); and Jac Phillips (junior, wide receiver/defensive back).

Coaching, schemes

Despite a new head coach, things haven't changed much as far as the coaching staff and schemes are concerned for the Warriors.

"We didn't have a lot of turnaround on the (coaching) staff and we don't have any new systems," Speck said. "I've been pleased with the effort and the buy-in."

Schedule

While excitement abounds at CAK, things could be a bit challenging out of the gate for the Warriors on Friday nights, who face three straight road games to open the 2023 campaign.

They open with a long road trip to South Carolina to tan-

gle with Darlington Aug. 18. CAK then heads to Seymour to play The King's Academy Aug. 25. The Warriors defeated the Lions last season. CAK will play at Boyd Buchanan Sept. 1 to open region play before hosting league rival Grace Christian Academy at Warrior Stadium Sept. 8.

TKA, the Buccaneers and the Rams all reached the post-season last year.

On Sept. 15, the Warriors make the trip to Lakeway Christian School and the Lions also made the playoffs last season, finishing with a 5-7 record. On Sept. 22, the Warriors host Cedar Bluff area rival Webb School of Knoxville, the defending region champions (10-1).

CAK hits the road again as it heads back to Hamilton County to play Chattanooga Christian (10-3 last year) on Sept. 29, before traveling to White County (which went 9-3 in 2022) Oct. 6.

After the bye week Oct. 13, the Warriors close out the regular season with league home games against Notre Dame Oct. 20 and Silverdale Baptist Academy Oct. 27.

In total, eight of the Warriors' nine in-state opponents qualified for the postseason, with the NDHS Irish being the lone exception (4-6).

~ By Ken Lay






Top: Developing an effective pass rush is a necessity for defenses to slow down high-powered offenses. This Christian Academy of Knoxville Spring Practice drill underscores this, as several Warriors work on fighting off blocks. Among them is sophomore lineman Caleb Flatt (61).

Above: All CAK skill position athletes work on proper footwork, as this stepping drill requires. Among the Warriors going through this drill is senior running back JC Blevins.

Above right: Working on his kickoff skills is CAK senior Shepard Gaston.



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KNOXVILLE CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

IRISH

“Win it all.” That’s the goal Keilyn Smith, a standout senior defensive end, has for his Knoxville Catholic High School Fighting Irish this season at the always difficult TSSAA Division II-AAA level.

New assistant coach Bob Kronenberg, a media-day spokesman for new co-head coaches Steve Matthews and Philip Shadowens who most recently was an assistant offensive line coach and scout with the NFL’s Atlanta Falcons (2012-22), hopes to help make this goal a reality and greatly improve upon last season’s 3-7 final record.

Among the good news for KCHS is the team’s returning experience.

Both sides of the line

While saying he’s “excited about all (our) returning starters,” Kronenberg added the Fighting Irish appear strong in both their “offensive line and defensive line” this season.

“Our offensive line is all returning starters; our defensive line is all returning starters,” Smith said. “Our secondary, we have a few new players, but the rest are

returning starters.”

Senior Cooper Crook is a key returning starter on the offensive line.

Kronenberg said he feels confident Cooper and Smith “fit that leadership mold,” adding he’s “really excited about both of them.”

Crook said his goals this season are to “dominate every game I play in and to become a leader, not for just the guys up front, but for the whole team.” Another motivation is to “prove all the people who have been talking down on us and had low expectations wrong,” he added.

Smith is confident a year of experience will benefit his game. “I know how to play better than last year,” he said. “I know how to rush the passer more, how the offensive lines are set, how they play and how I can play my game better.”

The coach also said he’s “excited about” senior Eli Lindsey, another returnee to the offensive line.

Concerning Jacob Rice, a newcomer who currently is lined up to play right tackle offensively, “... it’s early with him because I just found out about him (in June), but he’s



Matthews



Shadowens

See IRISH PREVIEW on Page 47

2023 IRISH SENIORS



Connor Ruth



Jaylon Harmon



Quincy Pannell



Bryson Gardner



Grayson Goodale



John Domzalski



Braxton Cox



Braylon Harmon



Nick Kaczmarek



Kaiden Surlas



Keilyn Smith



Antori Hamilton



Eli Lindsey



Cooper Crook



Andon Mashburn



Hayden Oliver

KCHS senior not pictured: **Joseph Briggeman**



IRISH FOOTBALL ROSTER

0 George ManciniSO RB/DB	25 Braylon HarmonSRWR/DB	52 JR FowlerSO OL/DL
1 Connor RuthSR WR/LB	26 Nick KaczmarekSR WR/DB	54 Eli LindseySR OL/DL
2 Jaylon HarmonSRWR/DB	27 Joseph HucklebyJRWR/DB	55 Cooper CrookSR OL/DL
3 Jaiven SimsJRRB/LB	28 Tyler DornJR..... K	56 Nicholas LandaSO OL/DL
4 Brenden GoodsonRB/DL	29 Connor WelchSOWR/DB	57 Anton HamiltonSO OL/DL
5 Quincy PannellSR RB/DB	30 Julius SandersFR RB/DB	58 Jordan PhillipsFR OL/DL
6 Dominic DaddabboSO WR/DB	31 DJ LoweryFR WR/DB	60 Ezekiel ChesnuttFR OL/DL
7 Tyreek KingSOWR/DB	32 Kaleb JohnsonSORB/LB	65 Stephen BertucciJR OL/DL
8 Jayden NealJRQB	33 Gavin JonesSORB/LB	68 Andon MashburnSR OL/DL
9 Bryson GardnerSRRB/LB	34 Cole ScraggsFRRB/DB	72 Xander LevinsFROL/DL/K
10 Grayson GoodaleSR RB/DB	35 Tate ShulerFRQB/DB	73 Jacob RiceSO OL/DL
11 Aron MaseSO WR/LB	36 Connor GraySOWR/DB	78 Hayden OliverSR OL/DL
12 JB MooreFRQB/DB	37 Rowan RamanFRWR/DB	80 Caleb KingFR K/TE
13 Jet TegelaarSOWR/DB	39 Jhamari ChampionFRWR/DB	81 Joseph BriggemanSR K
14 Tyson SuttonFRQB	40 Maddox BrownFRRB/DB	82 Shep BrownFRWR/DB
15 Wilson PollockFRQB/DB	41 Gavin GuinnFRTE/LB	83 Brayden HowardFRWR/DB
16 Casen JenkinsSOWR/DB	42 Colton GardnerSOLS	84 Thomas CaroccioFRWR/DB
17 Zach PflanzJRQB	43 Aiden CahillJRWR/LB	85 Liam PattersonFRWR/DB
18 Andrew BallengeeSOWR/DB	45 Aidan SullivanJRTE/DL	86 Isaac LeeFRWR/DB
19 John DomzalskiSRRB/LB	46 Ethan HillFRRB/DL	87 Zane GarzaFRWR/DB
21 Tyren BrabsonFRWR/LB	47 Brinkley ColquittJRK	88 Colston ColquittFRWR/DB
22 Braxton CoxSRRB/DB	48 Kaiden SurlasSRRB/LB	89 Ethan HoskinsFRWR/LB
23 Shannon MckinneyJRWR/DB	50 Keilyn SmithSROL/DL	93 Gavin MenardJRK
24 Jalen WrancherFRRB/DB	51 Antori HamiltonSROL/DL	99 Bennett CruzeFROL/DL

KNOXVILLE CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL 2023 SCHEDULE

IRISH

Date	Opponent
Aug. 18.....	Lakeway Christian
Aug. 25.....	@ Brevard, North Carolina
Sept. 1.....	St. John Paul II, Alabama
Sept. 8.....	@ Ensworth
Sept. 15.....	Briarcrest Christian
Sept. 29.....	@ Montgomery Bell Academy*
Oct. 6.....	@ Brentwood Academy*
Oct. 13.....	Lipscomb Academy*
Oct. 20.....	McCallie*
Oct. 27.....	@ Baylor*

* Denotes Division II-AAA East Region game



Irish Preview

From page 44

looked really good,” Kronenberg said about the sophomore. “He could definitely help us.”

Another key player returning up front is Antori Hamilton, a senior who will play on the defensive line. “I think he has a chance to be a special player,” Kronenberg said. “I haven’t been around him a ton, but he’s a really powerful, explosive kid.”

Skill positions, leadership

Additionally, the coach thinks the Irish have “really good skill players.” Junior Jayden Neal, who returns for his third year as starting quarterback, is a “heck of a talent,” Kronenberg said.

Senior Braylon Harmon returns as a major wide receiver threat.

Meanwhile, the coach said he hopes to see emerging “authentic” leadership from the seniors develop in the upcoming practices and games.

“Part of this whole thing coming together is leadership,” Kronenberg said. “I know what kind of players they are, and I have expectations about how they’re going to play.

“I think if we’re going to do anything, some of this leadership piece has to come together,” the coach added. “For me, how fast that comes along and how fast we develop that piece is more important than how they play, but I expect huge things out of these guys.”



While he expressed confidence the team has that leadership component among them, “It takes time, it takes trust,” Kronenberg said. “And it can’t be pushed. If you don’t have it, you don’t have it. But I know we have it in there—it’s just how it comes out.”

Final assessment

Overall, “I know what (we) have now, after being around these guys for a couple of months,” the coach said. “There is no reason in the world why we wouldn’t have everything we need to take this where we want it to go.

“No one knows how this will all shake out, but I know what we have up front, and I know we have plenty to make this thing go,” Kronenberg added. “I’m just super excited to see how it comes together because, for me, that’s the fun piece.”

~ By Kristen Morris



2023 IRISH CHEERLEADERS



Knoxville Catholic High School cheerleaders for 2023-24, in alphabetical order, are Sophie Brickner, Sophie Bunch, Ryan Davenport, Amelia Fielden, Sarah Fields, Ella Fuesting, Emma Layman, Emma Moss, Kenzy Navarro, Clare Robertson, Izzy Robertson, Chloe Surlas (captain), Kylie Stout and Elly Varner. Not pictured is head coach Randi Nelson.

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2023 **IRISH DANCE TEAM**



Knoxville Catholic High School dance team for 2023-24. Senior Maeva Cox (center) is flanked on the left side by, from left, junior Haley Baker and sophomores Claire Cheodle and Regina Hernandez-Gomez. On the right side, from left, are freshman Sophia Hennen and sophomores Eden Perkinson and Katie McCleary. Not pictured is head coach Ursula Margolis and assistant coach Shelby Reynolds.

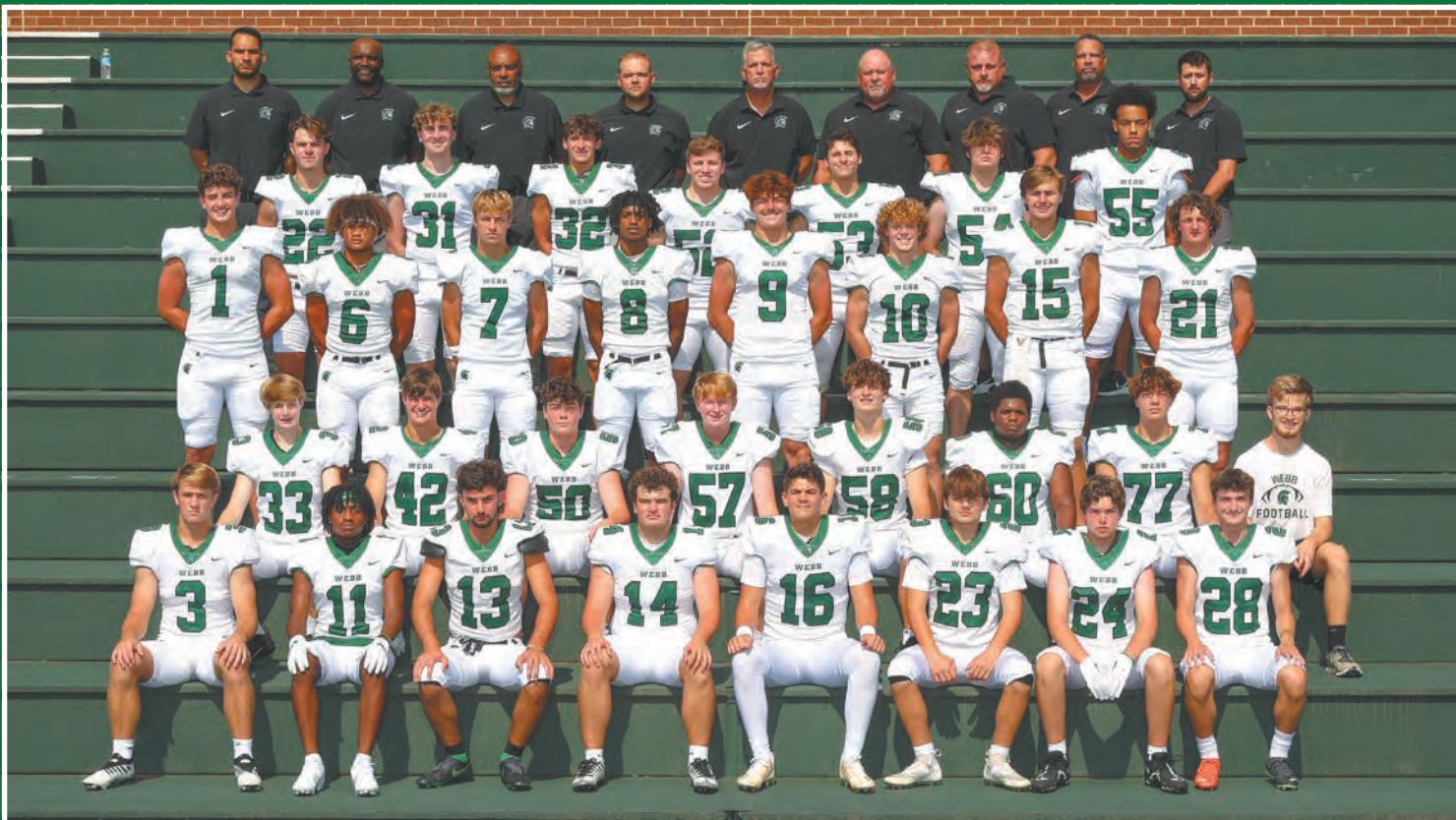
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Team Photo courtesy of Bobby Lewis/Pro Photo

WEBB SCHOOL OF KNOXVILLE

SPARTANS

It's been a year of transition for new Webb School of Knoxville varsity football head coach Don Mahoney, who is stepping up after a 38-year run for former head coach David Meske.



Mahoney

Before joining Webb's coaching staff last year, his experience had been "all college." Mahoney said he "spent 20-plus years at the college level, from the University of Tennessee to the University of Cincinnati, Central Michigan, Tulane and East Carolina.

"I'm lucky because last year was my first year coaching high school football ever," the new coach said, adding Webb was "a great place with a great coaching staff, and great players and people.

"That helped me prepare for this opportunity."

With the Spartans winning the Division II-AA East Region championship with a final 10-1 record in 2022, Mahoney described his time working under Meske as extremely helpful in allowing him to enter this 2023 season feeling prepared. "It was everything for me," he said. "For one, I got to learn under a legendary head coach. He's a person I truly respect in so many ways."

Learning about the culture and "day-to-day" schedule at Webb, "It's obviously a demanding academic school and there's a lot of pressure that goes with it," the coach said. "It's a well-rounded opportunity for me to learn here."

The Spartans do have many returning players who should be able to help this transition along.

Offense

Among the offensive returnees is senior Markeis Barrett, "a receiver currently committed to Vanderbilt" who is "a highly explosive player," Mahoney said, along with seniors

See SPARTANS PREVIEW on Page 55



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Webb School
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2023 SPARTANS SENIORS



Blake Carter



Jalen Hill



Harvey Niendorf



Markeis Barrett



Cooper Cameron



Marcus Roberts



Jack Wagner



Giffin Saunders



Alec Daniels



Eli Vickers



Grant Morton



Ari Klasky



Ethan Klasky



Dylan Prezbindowski



Xavier Hickman

Webb senior not pictured: **Mason Testerman**



SPARTANS FOOTBALL ROSTER

1 Blake Carter12 TE/DE	15 Jack Wagner12 QB/LS	50 Michael Pemberton10 OL/DL
3 Hal Niendorff11 RB/DB	16 Elias Childers10 QB	52 Ari Klasky12 OL/DL
5 Markeis Barrett12 WR/DB	21 Giffin Saunders12 WR/DB	53 Ethan Klasky12 OL/DL
6 Jalen Hill12 RB/DB	22 Alec Daniels12 RB/LB	54 Dylan Prezbindowski12 OL/DL
7 Harvey Niendorff12 WR/DB	23 Will Spiller9 TE/LB	55 Xavier Hickman12 OL/DL
9 Cooper Cameron12 TE/LB	24 Sam Herrick9 TE/LB	57 Andrew Pruet9 OL/LB
10 Marcus Roberts12 RB/LB	28 Clay Fultz10 K	58 Will Overton9 OL/DL
11 Greg Tate III10 WR/DB	31 Eli Vickers12 TE/DE	60 Jay Lowery10 OL/DL
13 Tristan Connors11 WR/DB	32 Grant Morton12 WR/DB	66 Mason Testerman12 OL/LB
14 Cruise Cunningham11 QB/LB	33 Drew Johnson9 WR/DB	77 Marvin Hicke10 OL/DL
	42 Baxter Johnson10 RB/LB	

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2023 SPARTANS CHEERLEADERS



Photo courtesy of Bobby Lewis/Pro Photo



Far left: It's a new head coach in Spartans County, but developing player fundamentals never changes. New boss Don Mahoney had his Webb School of Knoxville offensive players working on proper blocking techniques among many facets of the game developed during the program's Spring Practice.

Near left: Working on receiver-quarterback chemistry, Spartans senior wideout Giffin Saunders catches a pass.

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WEBB SCHOOL OF KNOXVILLE 2023 SCHEDULE		SPARTANS
Date	Opponent	
Aug. 18	Battle Ground Academy	
Aug. 25.....	Asheville School, North Carolina	
Sept. 1.....	Silverdale Baptist-	
Sept. 8	@ Notre Dame-	
Sept. 15	Chattanooga Christian-	
Sept. 22	@ CAK*	
Sept. 29	Brained	
Oct. 6	Grace Christian-	
Oct. 20	@ Boyd-Buchanan*	
Oct. 27	@ Lakeway Christian*	

** Denotes Division II-AA East Region game*

Spartans Preview

From page 50

Cooper Cameron at tight end and receiver Grant Morton.

Blake Carter, a senior, returns as starting tight end. Returning receiver Greg Tate III, a sophomore “made some plays for us last year,” the coach added.

Also on the offensive side, Mahoney said he is “excited and expecting big things” out of running backs Jalen Hill, a senior, and sophomore Baxter Johnson, both returnees.

He does hope to see improvement in some of the Spartans offensive “skill positions” — including a new quarterback — due to losing four starters on the offensive line.

Xavier Hickman, a senior offensive tackle, is an experienced big man being counted upon heavily to lead.



Defense

Mahoney expects the team to be anchored by its defensive unit because of the amount of returning experience there.

“Our defensive front for the most part is intact with guys who are returning,” Mahoney said, as “Xavier Hickman, Eli Vickers, Ethan Klasky, Ari Klasky and our linebacker, Cooper Cameron, are the backbone of our defense.” All five are seniors.

New faces

While the Spartans will be relying more heavily on return-

ing players this year, that doesn’t mean they don’t have any new faces.

“Some of the newcomers we are excited about are some younger players, young men who are from our middle school program,” the coach said.

Along the offensive line, “We are expecting big things out of Will Overton,” the coach said about the freshman.

Intangible strengths

Mahoney explained the team’s strengths center on consistency. “I think that’s a reflection of the kids, the seniors and just what the players are about and what Webb is about — a consistent model of working toward being better everyday,” the coach said, adding he “loves how the kids have responded to that” challenge.

Demands, goals

Mahoney has focused on consistency in “demanding the little things” from “the weight room, the conditioning piece, to stressing the small details as expectations for us to really work on.” He noted they were “highly penalized last year” and that this year, if they have situations like that come up, they “don’t want it to be (their) undoing.”

For now, he hopes to take this year of transition day by day. “My goals would be for us to continue to make progress each day,” Mahoney added. “I really believe this: if we are working each and every day, getting better in the areas we need to, we are going to like the end result.”

~ By Kristen Morris

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