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August 2020 Edition

**HIGH SCHOOL
FOOTBALL
PREVIEW**



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GET TO KNOW THE WRITERS

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JJ Lanier is a native of North Carolina and studied communications at Appalachian State University. JJ currently resides in Asheville, North Carolina. JJ is an expert on the NFL and college basketball. JJ is also an insider on all things ACC.

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Kipp Branch has been inside the Brunswick High Pirate Program for over a decade and is affectionately called Mr. Brunswick High. Kipp serves as one of the voices on the Pirates Radio Broadcast and pitched at Valdosta State University. Kipp is knowledgeable about all things 'Southern Sports'.

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Kenneth Harison Jr is a long time Atlanta native and graduated from Kennesaw State University with a Bachelor's Degree in Communications. Kenneth has a pulse on not only the Atlanta sports scene but the entire southern sports scene as well.

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**JASON BISHOP**

Jason Bishop has spent time at CNN Sports and CSS Sports in Atlanta and is currently host of The Jason Bishop Show with Kipp Branch, southeast Georgia's most listened to sports talk show. Jason is from the Golden Isles and no one knows more about area high school football.

The Southern Sports Edition was created to offer sports opinions from a southern perspective. The Southern Sports Edition offers some of the top sports minds and opinions from around the South. From coverage on High School Football to a beat on the Atlanta Braves, the Georgia Tech Yellow Jackets, SEC, ACC and all southern sports with actual southern opinions. The Southern Sports Edition is currently distributed in Southeast Georgia and Northeast Florida and growing everyday.

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IN THIS ISSUE...

HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL PREVIEW

GLYNN ACADEMY

TERROR-IZING

PAGE 4

by Kipp Branch

BRUNSWICK HIGH

THE VOYAGE AHEAD

PAGE 6

by Kipp Branch

FREDERICA ACADEMY

THE KNIGHTS' CRUSADE

PAGE 10

by Mike Anthony

MCINTOSH COUNTY ACADEMY

SETTING SAIL

PAGE 14

by Jason Bishop

WARE COUNTY

GATOR CHOMP

PAGE 16

by Mike Anthony

CAMDEN COUNTY

CAMDEN ON THE HUNT...AGAIN

PAGE 18

by Mike Anthony

STATESBORO BLUE DEVILS

SPEAK OF THE BLUE DEVILS

PAGE 24

by Mike Anthony

GRAYSON RAMS

RAMMING DOWN THE DOOR

PAGE 26

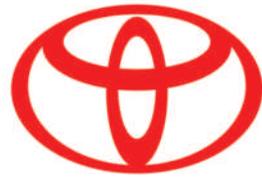
by Kenneth Harrison Jr

CAMDEN COUNTY

CATS ON THE HUNT

PAGE 28

by Kipp Branch



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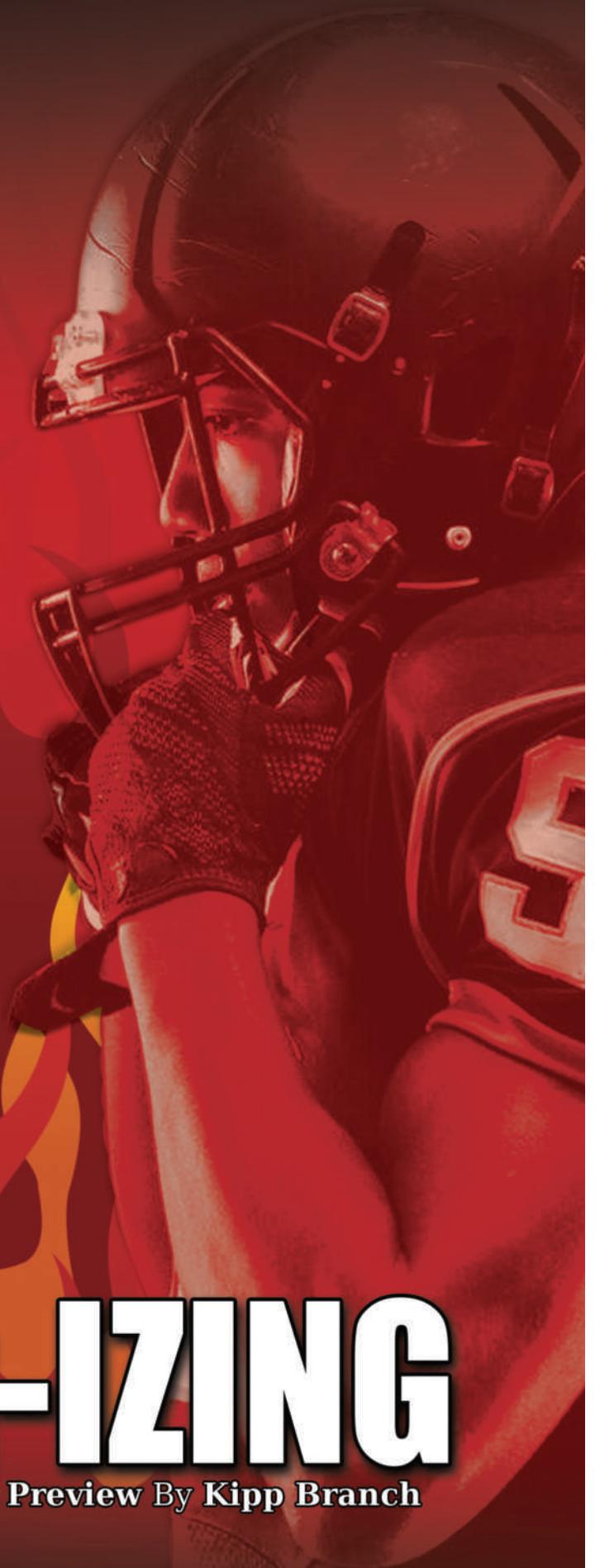
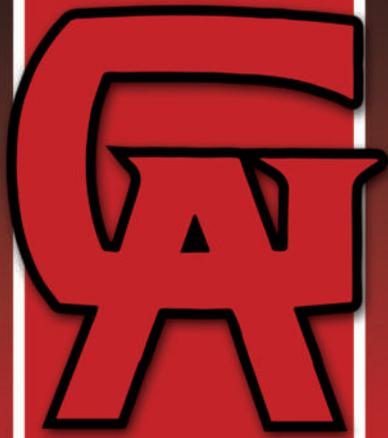
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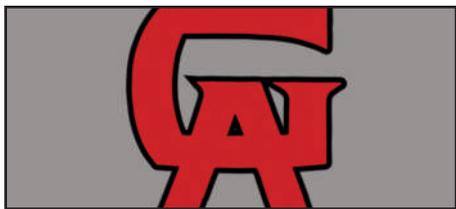
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TERROR-IZING

Glynn Academy Red Terrors' 2020 Preview By Kipp Branch



The 2020 edition of the Glynn Academy Red Terrors will be a blueprint of what they have been known for in these parts since 2014, which is a consistent winner.

Since Rocky Hidalgo took over on the south end of Brunswick in 2014, The Terrors have gone 55-22 and have appeared in a state title game, won 4 outright region championships, made deep runs in the state playoffs, and have beat rival Brunswick in six straight meetings.

2019 was not up to the standards of Glynn Academy football which has three goals every season and they are the City Championship, Region Championship, and State Championship.

The 2019 Terrors were City Champions, but fell short in the Region to Richmond Hill after winning four straight region championships. Did you know that before Rocky Hidalgo arrived at Glynn Academy that the Red Terrors went 43 years without a region football title?

The win total in 2019 was 6 for a program that is used to winning 8-12 games per season since 2014.

The 2020 Terrors have a chip on their shoulder to regain the region title and make a deep playoff run. The talent

is there.

TJ Lewis returns at QB and has some good offers to play college football. Caden Hutchinson will be the featured running back. Some Glynn folks are telling me that Hutchinson will be the best running back in the region that is stacked with quality running backs.

On defense Miles Smith returns at LB. Does it not always seem that Glynn has a linebacker that tackles everything that moves? Jayden Drayton could be the most dynamic play maker in coastal Georgia this fall. This is a talented roster. Schedule/My Prediction/* Region Contest:

Week 1: At Islands: The Red Terrors travel to Savannah to play Islands in what they are calling the I-95 classic. Well Glynn is rolling into Savannah and will whip Islands 35-17 to go 1-0 on the season.

Week 2: At Camden County: Glynn will be good but not Camden good, as the Wildcats have 9 or 10 division one football prospects on the roster. Cats beat GA 28-10. GA drops to 1-1.

Week 3: At Winder-Barrow: The Bulldogs went 3-7 in 2019. Glynn should take care of business 28-13. GA goes to 2-1 on the season.

Week 4: At Coffee: Many chalk this up as a loss, but not me. Glynn will always play good team defense, and Glynn wins these types of games when nobody gives them a shot. Terrors win 17-14 at Coffee to go to 3-1.

Week 5: At Brunswick*: Talent is pretty much even, but mentally Glynn owns this series and until Brunswick

gets over this mental hump its 7 straight for GA with a 25-22 win over the rival Pirates. GA goes to 4-1.

Week 6: Bradwell Institute*: GA owns Bradwell. Terrors go to 5-1 with a 42-14 win.

Week 7: At South Effingham*: The Mustangs will be no match for Glynn even home in "The Corral ". Glynn wins 38-17 to go to 6-1 and 3-0 in the region.

Week 8: Effingham County*: Effingham is in rebuild mode and that is never a good thing when you play Glynn in a region contest. GA wins at home 42-14 over Effingham. GA goes to 7-1 and 4-0.

Week 9: Richmond Hill*: I have gone back and forth with this one. 7A Richmond Hill playing in 6A has more talent on paper, but Glynn has Rocky Hidalgo and everyone is anointing the Wildcats as Region Champions. If Glynn comes into this game with no region losses they won't lose to the Wildcats. Terrors clinch the region title at home with a 28-24 win over Richmond Hill. GA goes to 8-1 and 5-0

Week 10: At Statesboro*: Trap game in Statesboro. I'm putting Glynn on upset alert here. After clinching the region Glynn comes out flat and drops a tough contest to Statesboro at historic Womack Field 24-17 to finish the regular season at 8-2 and 5-1

The Red Terrors will enter the playoffs as the number 1 seed from Region 2-AAAAAA, and makes it to the third round in a huge bounce back season.





THE VOYAGE AHEAD

Brunswick High Pirates' 2020 Preview By Kipp Branch



The 2020 Brunswick High Pirates, on paper, have a chance to be a pretty good football team this fall.

Sean Pender enters his 4th season as head coach of the Pirates and the Pirate faithful are excited about this upcoming football season.

The Pirates have some solid returning talent coming back in 2020 from a 6-6 season in 2019 that saw Brunswick win their first playoff game since 2010 before falling to eventual State Champion Harrison in the second round of the playoffs.

is the wild card for BHS. Lee has put in the work, trimmed down and looks good for the 2020 season. Lee led BHS to a huge comeback win at New Hampstead last year that saved the 2019 season.

On defense, the Pirates have size and athletic ability on the defensive line with players like Kayshawn Thomas.

Camron Crump is a huge producer at linebacker returns for his senior season.

Amarion Whitfield moves to corner from WR this fall and looks good so far.

Devonte Gadson and Derrick Smith both had solid 2019 seasons in the secondary.

Breakout player this season will be AJ Wilson. Wilson has bulked up to 225 lbs. this offseason and is ready to be an all-star candidate at LB for BHS.

Schedule and Predictions:
* Region Game

region game is the City Championship against the Terrors. BHS is the home team and has lost 6 straight in the series and Glynn won in 2019 with a walk off field goal to win 24-21. Teams look even on paper, but until BHS has a lead on a scoreboard that reads 0:00 then Glynn is the pick here. GA wins 25-22. Pirates drop to 4-1 and 0-1.

Week 6: @ South Effingham (Guyton, GA)*: The Mustangs move back up to 6A after a playoff berth in 2019. Pirates go to the Corral and win 34-17 to go 5-1 and 1-1.

Week 7: Statesboro (Statesboro, GA)*: The Blue Devils are also back in 6A. Statesboro made the playoffs in 2019 and have been a massive rebuild for the last few seasons. Pirates win at home 28-20 to go to 6-1 and 2-1.

Week 8: @ Richmond Hill (Richmond Hill, GA)*: The Wildcats with 7A numbers stayed in 6A after



The Pirate offense will be led by the two headed monster at running back, Chukobe Hill and Khamori Simmons. This running back group for the Pirates refers to themselves as the "Wolfpack" and will be the best RB group in the region. Hill and Simmons combined for 1,600 rushing yards as sophomores in 2019 with Hill rushing for 1,058.

The offensive line has two 300-pound athletes that will open holes, in senior Caleb Cook and Kanaya Charlton. Both athletes are generating a lot of recruiting buzz. Cook is impressive in the weight room and can squat over 500 lbs.

Xavier Bean will lead a deep group of wide receivers, and KJ Lee will be back for his senior season at QB. Lee

Week 1: @ Windsor Forest (Savannah, GA): Pirates go on the road and unleash the Wolfpack on the Knights. Pirates 34-7 go to 1-0

Week 2: McIntosh County Academy (Darien, GA): The Bucs come to Glynn County Stadium and fight hard, but don't have the depth to beat BHS. Pirates win 35-14 to go to 2-0

Week 3: Beach (Savannah, GA): BHS goes to 3-0 with a 38-8 win over Beach.

Week 4: @ New Hampstead (Savannah, GA): New Hampstead will have athletes. BHS and The Phoenix played a classic in 2019, but BHS has all of their playmakers returning on offense in 2020. BHS wins 40-18 to go to 4-0

Week 5: Glynn Academy *: First

getting a waiver from the GHSA. RH should be the region favorites and BHS has lost two straight to RH. Make it 3. RH wins 24-20. BHS drops to 6-2 and 2-2.

Week 9: @ Bradwell Institute (Hinesville, GA)*: Interesting fact is BHS has lost the last two times they have played the Tigers in Hinesville. That streak won't reach three. BHS wins 35-13. Pirates go to 7-2 and 3-2 in region play.

Week 10: Effingham County (Springfield, GA)*: Effingham County is in rebuild mode. Pirates win 40-17 to finish the regular season at 8-2 and 4-2 in the region.

BHS will be a solid playoff team in 2020.

SOUTHEAST GEORGIA HEALTH SYSTEM OPENS NEW WOUND CARE CENTER ON CAMDEN CAMPUS

At any given time, nearly six million Americans suffer from a problem wound. The wound may be caused by diabetes, poor circulation, radiation, a pressure sore or injury. Whatever the cause, a slow-healing wound should not be ignored.



Gary Willis can vouch for that. When the St. Marys resident injured himself during a lawn mower accident, his wife insisted he see a doctor. Thinking the wound would heal on its own, Mr. Willis waited. When it became infected, Mr. Willis, a former Southeast Georgia Health System Camden Advisory Board member, sought medical help. “My surgeon performed a skin graft, then emphatically recommended the Health System’s Wound Care Center,” he says. For several weeks, he drove two hours round trip from St. Marys to the Wound Care Center on the Brunswick Campus. “The staff’s professionalism

was worth the trip, but the experience would have been more comfortable closer to home,” Mr. Willis recalls. Local care for chronic wounds is important since healing requires close monitoring and, oftentimes, multiple treatments.

Mr. Willis’s treatment included several sessions in a hyperbaric oxygen therapy (HBOT) chamber. The chamber contains 100% oxygen, which hastens healing and stimulates the growth of new blood vessels and tissue. Thanks to HBOT, his wound healed. Left untreated, it might have developed more serious complications. In some patients, an untreated wound can lead to amputation.

With the opening of a new Wound Care Center on the Health System’s Camden Campus, area residents now have access to the same high quality care available in Brunswick. “Our specialized treatments speed healing so that patients get back to doing the things they enjoy,” says Damon Brantley, M.D., chief of the Department of Surgery at the Camden Campus and a physician at the Wound Care Center.

Similar to the Brunswick facility, Camden’s center is operated in partnership with Healogics, the nation’s largest provider of advanced wound care services. The staff includes physicians with advanced training in lingering wounds caused by a variety of conditions and nurses trained in chronic wound care.

After being evaluated to find the underlying cause of the wound, patients receive a personalized treatment plan. This typically includes debridement (removal of dead skin and tissue), a lab test, nutritional counseling and infection management. If needed, they may also receive more advanced treatments, including:

- Negative pressure wound therapy
- Bioengineered skin substitutes
- Biological and biosynthetic dressings
- Growth factor therapies

From his perspective as a former patient, Mr. Willis wholeheartedly agrees. “Opening a center in Camden demonstrates that the Health System has the technology, knowledge and medical expertise to keep our community healthy. There’s a heightened sense of caring and accountability when they offer these advanced services.”

The Southeast Georgia Health System Camden Campus Wound Care Center was made possible partly because of the community’s generous support of the Georgia HEART rural hospital tax credit program. The HEART program increases access to health care by allowing taxpayers to redirect their Georgia state taxes to rural hospitals and receive a 100% state tax credit.

If you or a loved one need advanced wound care, please call 912-540-6802 to schedule an appointment. To learn more about the HEART program, visit sghs.org/ga-tax-credit.

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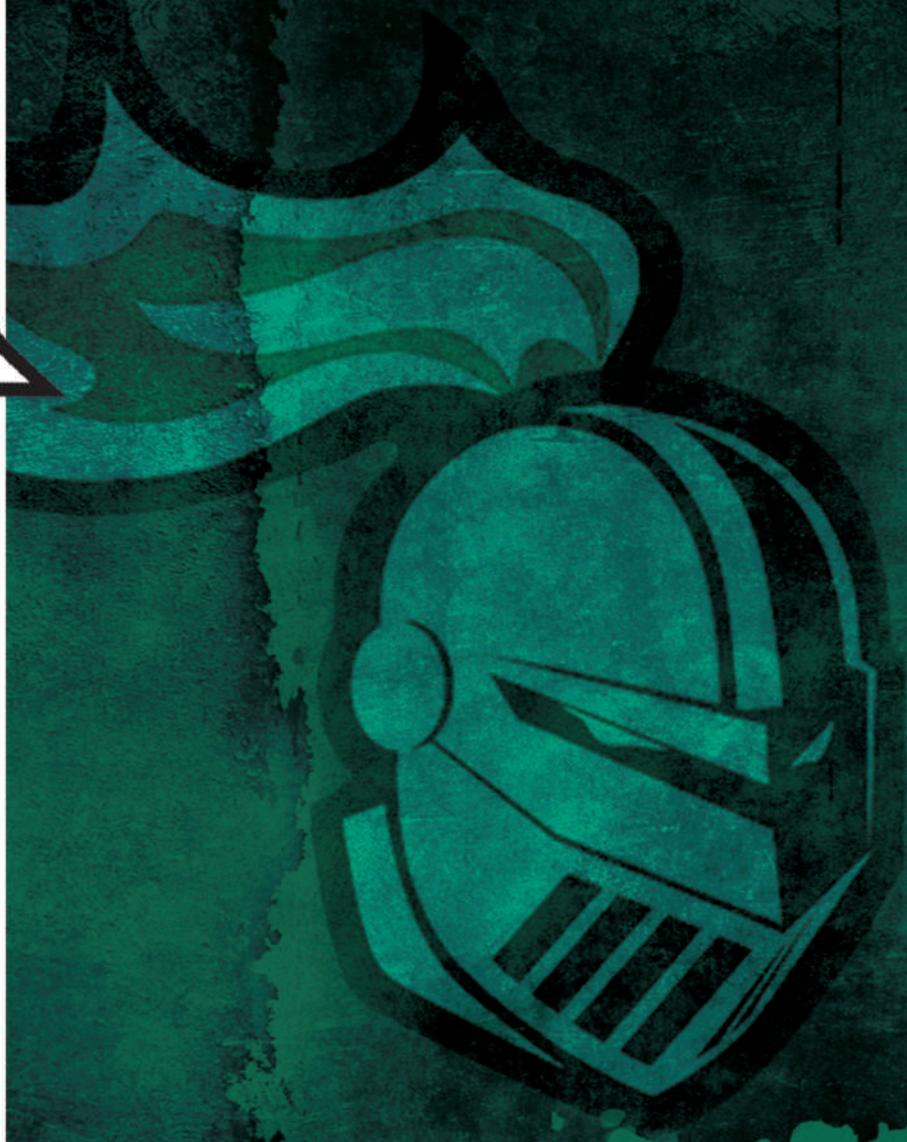
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THE KNIGHTS' CRUSADE

Frederica Academy Knights' 2020 Preview By Kipp Branch



Brandon Derrick enters his 8th season as head football coach of the Frederica Academy Knights this fall.

Derrick has built Frederica into one of the elite programs in the Georgia Independent School Association (GISA) by winning the State Championship in 2018.

The Knights finished 4-6 in 2019 as they rebuilt from losing so many seniors from the championship team, but made the playoffs and lost in the first round to Southland Academy.

The 2020 Knights have 14 starters returning from last season and are experienced across the offensive and defensive lines of scrimmage.

Depth could be an issue because the Knights have a total of 31 players on the entire roster. Derrick says "We have a chance to develop and be good if we can avoid injuries".

Garrett Squires will anchor the offensive line. Derrick says he is versatile and is a team leader in the locker room.

Jacob Triplett will plug in at right tackle. The defensive line has experience with Will Thompson and Will Counts returning. Counts is a three-year starter at nose guard.

The Knights will run a spread offense that will be more run based. Thomas Veal looks to be the QB and looked good in limited reps in 2019 after he returned late in the season from a preseason injury.

Kyle Perez is up to 185 lbs. and will get the bulk of carries at running back. Watch for Jordan Triplett to break on to the scene this fall at WR/RB.

Josh Meadows and Josh Elliott will lead an experienced linebacker position. Jayden Rose will be one of the better corners in the region.

The schedule/My Predictions/ * Region Game

Week 1: @ Valwood: Valwood might as well be the third public school in Lowndes County.

The Valiants cherry pick Valdosta and Lowndes and that makes them a state title contender every season. These two

schools have developed a great rivalry over the past 4-5 seasons.

Beating Valwood on the road will be very tough. The Knights play well but fall short 27-20 to go 0-1 on the season, but could see Valwood again in the postseason.

Week 2: Calvary: Calvary always has one or two very talented players, but in the home opener Frederica gets it done 28-22 to even its record to 1-1 on the season.

Week 3: @Tiftarea: The Knights travel to Chula, which is 10 miles north of Tifton to play the Panthers who went 8-4 in 2019.

This could be another playoff preview game for Frederica. The Knights come up a little short in this one 17-14 to fall to 1-2 on the season.

Week 4: Brantley County: The Herons come to St. Simons to play football instead of the entire county coming over for 4th of July Fireworks. Highly anticipated matchup between the schools.

The public school Herons take the private school Knights for granted and get beat 24-18. The Knights go to 2-2 on the season.

Week 5: Long County: Long is awful in football. FA wins 27-14 to go to 3-2

Week 6: Memorial Day: The Matadors roll to SSI and get blistered 34-6. FA goes to 4-2 on the season.

Week 7: @ Bulloch Academy *: The Gators, I'm told, have been recruited hard by Benedictine and lost key players.

The Knights find a way to win the region opener on the road 28-26 to set up a battle with Pinewood for the region crown in two weeks. FA goes to 5-2.

Week 8: St. Andrews *: The Knights handle the Lions 34-16 to go to 6-2 and 2-0

Week 9: @ Pinewood: The Patriots are loaded and the Knights gave the game away to them in 2019.

FA can win this game in Bellville, which is near Claxton. Due to factors out of their control, if you get my drift, the Knights fall short 27-23 and go to at 6-3 and 2-1 in region play.

Week 10: Trinity Christian: The Crusaders roll into St. Simons and crusade out with a 28-14 loss. FA finishes the regular season with a 7-3 record and finish 3-1 in the region.

Frederica is a solid playoff team barring a rash of injuries in 2020.



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SETTING SAIL

McIntosh Academy's 2020 Preview By Jason Bishop



High football fast approaches and many hope we will not lose the season to CoVid-19.

One person in particular that hopes the 2020 season will kick off is the head coach of the McIntosh County Academy Buccaneers, Bradley Warren.

The Bucs appear to have found their long-term answer at the head coaching position of the football team.

Warren took over the program last season and got the Bucs into the playoffs; an accomplishment very few expected from MCA in 2019.

The Bucs fell to region foe, Emanuel County Institute 28-23 in the first round of the GHSA A Playoffs.

MCA returns in 2020 with a team that will be battled tested. The Bucs were considered to be young in 2019 and were in every game, even against teams that most thought would beat MCA handily.

The region also changes for the Buccaneers and will see new and old enemies in region 3-A. The Bucs will be joined by Metter, Bryan County, Claxton, ECI, Jenkins County, Portal and Screven County. This is a very winnable region and the Bucs may be the best team in the region.

In my opinion, region 3-A will be come down to ECI and MCA. The winner of that game may very well end up winning the region.

This is what MCA's season looks like for 2020.

Week 1: @ Brunswick High: The Bucs will make the short trip over to Glynn County Stadium to take on the 6A Brunswick High Pirates. MCA will look good early, but BHS has too many athletes and spoils the season opener.

Week 2: Windsor Forest: The Bucs will welcome the Windsor Forest Knights to The Ship in Darien and show everyone how good they are. Look for MCA to win handily here.

Week 3: @ Charlton: This is a game in which 2 programs are heading in opposite directions. Charlton County, a perennial power, finds itself in a bit of a rebuild, while MCA will be very good.

The Bucs will win this game, but nothing ever comes easy down in The Swamp.

Week 4: @ Bryan County: The Bucs will head up to Pembroke a 2-1 football team and the momentum will continue against Bryan County. MCA gets to 3-1 on the season and gets an important region win over the Redskins.

Week 5: Claxton: This is the beginning a tough and important three game stretch for the Bucs. MCA welcomes Claxton to the ship and will earn a hard-fought win at home to stay undefeated in the region and go 4-1 on the season.

Week 6: @ ECI: This game will likely determine the winner of the region. I think MCA has a more talented team than ECI, but with the Bulldogs will be at home and this will be the sixth straight game for the Bucs. I am not sure they will come out on top here.

Plus, ECI's schedule is brutal. Especially, the first half. Thus, ECI will almost have to get this game. I really think this contest could go either way.

Week 7: Metter: The Buccaneers get a much-deserved off week before the Metter Tigers pay a visit to The Ship. Metter can score and score quickly. This will be a great test for the MCA defense.

The Bucs defense will be up to that test and hold off the Tigers in a high scoring affair.

Week 8: @ Screven County: Another region road game for MCA. The Bucs will be flying high off the Metter win and will ride that momentum to another victory. 6-2 for MCA.

Week 9: Portal: Portal pays a Halloween visit to Darien. There won't be much tricking done by the Portal Panthers in this game. Instead the Buccaneers will be treating themselves to a 7-2 record.

Week 10: Jenkins County: Seeding will be on the line as MCA will be making a back to back trip to the playoffs. The Bucs will finish 8-2 on the season and will be a force to be contended with in the GHSA A Playoffs.

Names you will need to know if you are an MCA fan: Senior RB Trenton Johnson, Senior QB Dalton McClellan and Junior QB Austin Crosby. Both QB's will see time.

Don't be surprised if you see the MCA Buccaneers playing on TV in December.

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Gators

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Ware County Gators' 2020 Preview By Mike Anthony



Last year saw the Jason Strickland era begin with a bang at Ware County.

Arriving in Waycross after successful stints at Lamar County, Fitzgerald and Pierce County, Strickland wasted no time in making his mark.

The Gators took a few

“I’m lucky to have a staff that is experienced and has been together for a while. As for the kids, I think they’re fine. Honestly, I think kids respond to this kind of shake-up and adversity better than most adults.

“They have taken the attitude of focusing on what needs to be done each day and just working forward from there. That’s big for them and big for our community. A lot of people in this area need something to make them smile. And for a lot of these towns, football can do that. So long as we can be safe and play, that’s something we’re looking to do for ourselves and for the community.”

“I don’t think it’s a stretch to say this will be the toughest region in 5-A,” Strickland said. “It might be one of the toughest in the state at any level. But we’ll embrace that challenge. There will be a lot of tense Friday nights, but a lot of fun Friday nights.”

Heading into a tough schedule, the Gators will lean heavily on proven leaders on both sides of the ball.

Rising senior linebacker Michael Mincey has Strickland’s trust to make calls and anchor the defense.

On the attacking front, quarterback Thomas Castellanos will be a junior this fall, but has been



lumps early on in the non-region schedule, only to storm through Region 2-AAAAA undefeated and make it to the second round of the state playoffs before bowing out to eventual state champion Buford.

Heading into Year Two under Strickland, Ware has faced the same trials and tribulations as every other team in GHSA, as they have been limited in their preparations for 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

“I think we’re getting through everything just fine,” Strickland said.

It’s good that the Gators have been hard at work because there will be no shortage of challenges on this season’s schedule.

Ware County joins longtime rival Wayne County in a shift to Region 1-AAAAA with the GHSA’s latest region alignments.

The teams spent the last few seasons playing region rivals in and around coastal Georgia, but the competition now shifts west and north as they join a stacked region that includes Coffee, Veterans and Warner Robins.

at the helm of the Gator attack since he was a freshman.

“Michael has some big-time offers and he’s a leader on and off the field for us,” Strickland said. “Thomas can get things done with both his arm and his legs. He’s got another year in the system and he’s really starting to settle in and run the offense.”

In addition to their tough region slate, the Gators will travel to Florida to take on Bartram Trail and will also face Cook and Thomson in non-region action.

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THE NEW BUZZ

Wayne County Yellow Jackets' 2020 Preview By Mike Anthony



Wayne County is no stranger to great football. The Yellow Jackets rank 26th all-time in the state of Georgia with 561 wins.

Better yet, Wayne County is currently enjoying its most successful run to date.

Clarke Central.

This year's team figures to be stacked as the Jackets return eight starters on offense and seven on defense.

Highly touted offensive guard Weston Franklin also returns to Jesup after spending a season at the IMG Academy.

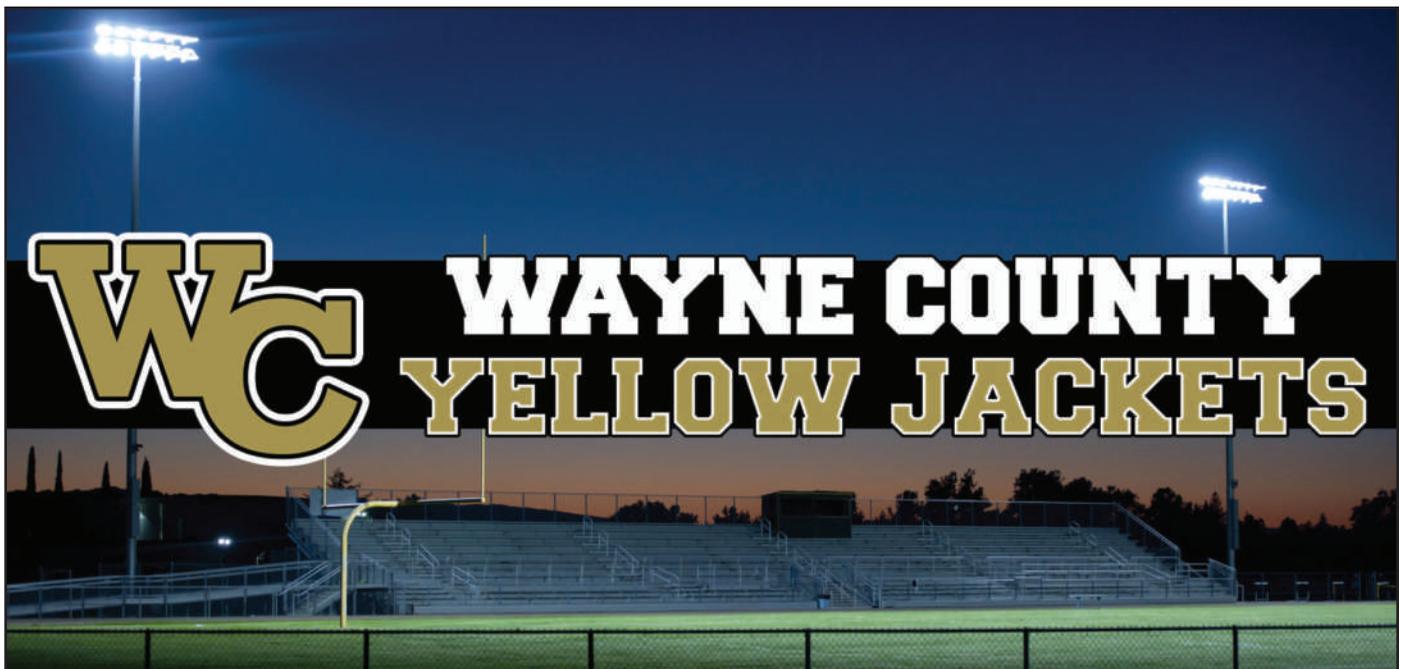
"With everything going on (related to COVID-19 and practice restrictions), I still think we're ahead of the game," WCHS coach Ken Cribb said. "We have a lot of veteran guys who are ready to get the season going."

"We've got a great group of coaches and our kids are ready to work hard every day."

Cribb and his team continue to have high hopes for another solid season, but the road will be much rougher due to region realignment.

Wayne County won its two most recent region titles while regularly dispatching struggling rivals such as Statesboro, South Effingham and New Hampstead.

Now a resident in Region 1-AAAAA, the Jackets will run a non-stop gauntlet of perennial powers Coffee, Veterans, Ware



Three of the school's 15 region championships have come during a run that has seen the Jackets reach the playoffs in a school-record eight consecutive seasons.

The 2019 campaign saw a small step back with an 8-3 record following back-to-back region titles in 2017-18, but the Jackets notched a first-round win in the state tournament before dropping a close contest to state quarterfinalist

One of the most impressive aspects of the Jackets' recent success has been their ability to endure change. All prep teams must deal with graduating seniors, but many perennially successful programs have continuity at head coach. As for Wayne County, it has found its current success under three different head coaches.

"I give a lot of credit to everyone in the program," said Cribb, who is entering his fourth season with a 28-6 record at Wayne.

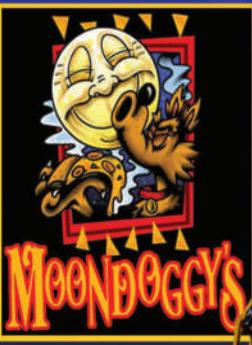
County and Warner Robins.

All five teams made it to at least the second round of last year's playoffs, with Warner Robins finishing as state runners-up for a third consecutive season.

Opponents such as Pierce County, Benedictine and Richmond Hill dot the Jackets' non-region schedule, meaning that there will be very few breathers along the way.

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SPEAK OF THE BLUE DEVILS

Statesboro High Blue Devils' 2020 Preview By Mike Anthony



It has been a decade since the Statesboro Blue Devils have been considered a state power on the football field, but the program's ongoing trudge back from some dark times aims to take another step forward this fall.

Now four years removed from the only 0-10 season in school history, Statesboro head coach Jeff Kaiser - who was announced as head coach ahead of the 2017 season - has his team steadily

to their own devices to continue to study playbooks and stay in shape.

When June rolled around, word came from both the GHSA and Bulloch County that there would be a slow roll-out of parameters for practices that will gradually include more football-related activities with more players allowed at each practice.

All of the virus-related restraints on team activities are just one facet of what will be a challenging 2020 for the Devils.

While they have made the state playoffs two years running, Statesboro played those seasons in a five-team Class-AAAAA region. With Ware County and Wayne County dominating the region, the Devils' postseason prospect essentially boiled down to a two-game season with

championships with SHS for three consecutive seasons at the turn of the last decade.

The Devils lose relatively little in total personnel from last year's squad, but still have some big holes to fill.

Always a run-first team, Statesboro will have to fill the shoes of running backs Jaylin Roberson and Davardrian Lipsey.

Also departed is Corey McCullough, who anchored the linebacker corps and also served as a stellar blocker and short-yardage back on offense.

If Statesboro is to continue its track record of improvement, it will stem from both lines.

The Devils were forced to play with inexperienced and - at times - undersized linemen over the last few



improving.

The Devils have qualified for the state playoffs in each of the last two seasons and got back to the .500 mark last fall for the first time since 2014.

As has been the case for teams all around the country, this summer's training has been significantly hindered by the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic.

School was called off more than a month before the scheduled spring practices for Statesboro and simply getting students - football players or otherwise - through the academic year will be tough.

Kaiser and his staff continued to communicate to the team through texts, emails and phone calls, with players left

games against New Hampstead and South Effingham, with any of the teams able to clinch a playoff berth with as little as one region win.

That will change this fall as Statesboro bumps up to Class-AAAAAA and will join a region with more teams that features plenty of old rivals.

South Effingham joins Statesboro in the move up and they will group in with Brunswick, Glynn Academy, Effingham County, Richmond Hill and Bradwell Institute.

The Devils have been region rivals with all of these teams at some point in their past, most notably with Brunswick, which traded region

seasons. But a more veteran crew this season that has taken to Kaiser's emphasis on growing in the weight room should now provide the Devils with a formidable presence up front whether attacking an opposing quarterback or paving a clean path for their own runners.

Statesboro is slated to kick off the season against former region rival Wayne County in the Erk Russell Classic at Georgia Southern's Paulson Stadium.

The Devils will also take on Swainsboro, Houston County and Jenkins before spending all of October and November in their region slate.



RAMMING DOWN THE DOOR

Grayson Rams' 2020 Preview By Kenneth Harrison Jr



Grayson is one of the elite programs in Georgia's largest classification, AAAAAAA.

The Rams won state championships in 2011 and 2016. They hope to return to the top of the GHSA mountain in 2020.

Last season Grayson was expected to compete for the state championship. They beat Marietta by two touchdowns during the regular season. The Blue Devils were the most talented team in Georgia and they went on to win the 7A championship.

The Rams finished 2019 with a 10 - 2 record. They lost in the quarterfinals to Lowndes, 28 - 20. Lowndes advanced to the state championship game.

Grayson has produced a lot of talent. Most notably, Robert Nkemdiche was a five-star recruit and the top player in the class of 2012.

This season is no different. Wide receiver Daejon Reynolds is the 19th ranked player in the state and a four-star recruit. He's committed to Florida. He's 6'2 and 190 pounds so

he has good size. Reynolds played at Central Gwinnett last season and he had 88 catches for 1,534 yards and 14 touchdowns. He was the Touchdown Club of Gwinnett's wide receiver of the year for the 2019 season.

Quarterback Carlos Del Rio-Wilson is also a four-star recruit and the 20th ranked player in Georgia. He will join Reynolds in Gainesville. He transferred from McEachern and this is his first season at Grayson. Del Rio-Wilson is 6'3, 205 pounds and he's a dual threat. He's in the 2020 Elite 11.

Running back Phil Mafah is the 27th ranked player in the state and another four-star recruit. The 6'1, 220-pound back is committed to Clemson. He missed several games at the beginning of the season due to a broken collarbone. He ran for 676 yards and 9 TD's.

Defensive end Victoine Brown is a three-star recruit and the 34th ranked player in state. He's committed to Louisville.

The season begins August 21st versus Creekside. The Seminoles are a 5A team and they were 7 - 5 in 2019. This will be an easy win.

Week 2 is at McEachern. The Indians were 12 - 1 last year and they are a very good team. This will be a close win.

Stephenson comes to town

next. The Jaguars were 10 - 2 last season and they were one of the best 4A teams. They can't compete with 7A talent though and Grayson wins big.

The Rams travel to Archer in Week 4. Last year's game was very close, a 34 - 31 Grayson win. The Tigers are looking to build off of their momentum from 2019 after finishing 9 - 4. This will be another close game but I give the edge to Grayson.

Paul Bryant high school from Alabama comes to town. I don't know much about the Stampede but I know they can't compete with Grayson.

Mill Creek is next on the schedule. The Hawks are a very good team and were 10 - 3 in 2019. This will be a battle, but the Rams will win.

Grayson travels to South Gwinnett for the sixth game. The Comets are a bad team and they'll lose by 30.

After a bye week Parkview is the next game. The Panthers were 12 - 2 last season and they are led by four-star running back Cody Brown. I think Parkview will win.

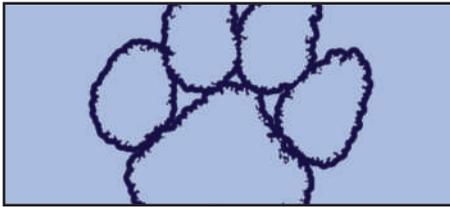
The final two games are at Brookwood and Newton. They'll win both games. I think Grayson will make it to the state championship game in 2020. They are the most talented team in Georgia.





CATS ON THE HUNT

Camden County Wildcats' 2020 Preview By Kipp Branch



The Camden County Wildcats, in my mind, are a blue blood program in South Georgia.

The Wildcats have won three State titles (2003, 2008, and 2009) this century.

Camden finished the 2019 season with an 8-3 record losing to eventual champion Marietta in the first round.

Bob Sphire is one of the better high school football head coaches in the business, and enters his 4th season as the head coach.

Sphire took over a football program in 2017 that had sunk pretty low from what Jeff Herron built at Camden.

Slowly Sphire has rebuilt this program the right way. His first two seasons he played a lot of young kids, who had to gain their experience in Region 1-AAAAAAA, which I refer to as the SEC of Georgia High School football. The roster has a lot of good quality players that can compete in the highest level in the State.

Micah Morris is the highest ranked recruit on the roster. The 4-star offensive tackle committed to the University of Georgia in April. Morris is 6-4 and 320 pounds and the future looks bright for Morris.

The schedule is brutal with not one cupcake to be found. Can Camden get back to that team that goes 3 rounds or deeper in the playoffs in 2020?

Region Game */ Schedule/My Predictions

Week 1: Columbia: Long bus ride to Chris Gillman Stadium spells doom for the visitors historically. I don't see Columbia pulling off an upset here. The Cats go to 1-0 on the season with a 44-18 win over Columbia.

Week 2: Glynn Academy: The Terrors make the 30-minute ride down I-95 South and run into an angry bunch of Wildcats.

Glynn will be a good football team in 2020, but not Camden County good. Camden goes to 2-0 on the season with a 28-10 win over Glynn Academy.

Week 3: @ Ribault High School (Florida): Ribault will always have dangerous athletes that could cause some problems, but they won't have the depth to compete for 4 quarters.

Ribault hits a few big plays on offense, but they will lay a big egg on defense and get drilled by Camden 42-20. Camden goes to 3-0.

Week 4: Marietta: Who scheduled this non-region game? This is about as brutal as they come.

The defending state champs travel to Chris Gillman Stadium, which could be factoring in Atlanta traffic a 7-hour bus ride.

Marietta lost a lot, and I'm banking on the bus trip taking its toll on the Blue Devils. Camden finds a way to

win 28-24 to go to 4-0 on the season.

Week 5: @ Oakleaf High School (Florida): Could this be a trap game? Maybe but if you beat Marietta you will not lose to Oakleaf. The Wildcats go to 5-0 with a 49-14 win.

Week 6: Coffee: Remember the brutal schedule comment? Look at these next two games. Coffee drops to 5-A this year and should make some serious noise in football. They will not beat Camden in Kingsland, however. Cats go to 6-0 with a 21-13 win over Coffee.

Week 7: @ Warner Robins: Playing at Warner Robins is no picnic. Warner Robins will compete for a state title in 5-A. I see Camden slipping by this one by the skin of their teeth 21-20 to go into region play at 7-0.

Week 8: @ Colquitt County *: A win here would be considered an upset at the state level. This schedule takes its toll on the Wildcats and they fall to the Packers 27-20 to drop to 7-1 and 0-1

Week 9: Tift County *: You never know what you are going to get with Tift County. Camden wins this region contest 33-21 to go 8-1 and 1-1.

Week 10: @ Lowndes *: Can Camden win this one on the road to secure a home playoff game? You have to be special to win at Lowndes these days.

Camden falls short 28-16 to finish 8-2 and 1-2 for the regular season.

Solid playoff team battle tested by a brutal schedule gets them into the second or possibly third round of state playoffs.



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