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August 2024 Edition



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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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Colin Lacy is the voice of the Southeast Bulloch Yellow Jackets. Colin also works with Westwood One Sports and Bowl Season radio for National College Football and NFL broadcasts across the country. Colin also calls Georgia Tech baseball for the Georgia Tech Sports Network and also works with the ACC Network.

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Charlie Moon has been the voice for seven highschool football and baseball state championships in South Carolina and Georgia. Charlie has worked with Fox Sports South, SCETV, NFHS and Charlton Sports Network. Charlie is currently the voice of the Richmond Hill Wildcats.

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Mike Spiers is the voice of the Camden County Wildcats. Mike has been the public address announcer for Camden baseball for over a decade. Mike graduated from Nicholls State University in Thibodaux, LA. Mike is heavily involved in Camden County athletics.

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Jason Bishop graduated from Kennesaw State University and formerly worked at CNN Sports. Jason hosts "The Jason Bishop Show", south Georgia's most listened to sports talk show.

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 all across Southeast Georgia and growing everyday.

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HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL PREVIEW



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BRUNSWICK HIGH PIRATES



2024 PREVIEW

Pirates To Set Sail By Teddy Bishop



As the Brunswick High Pirates get ready to set sail for the 2024 football season, I sat down with Head Coach Garrett Grady for an exclusive interview.

"We've had 110-115 guys show up for practice every day," Coach Grady related. "The players have been working hard, and we're looking forward to getting back 'Between the Bricks'."

Brunswick High is looking to improve on last year's 7-4 record, which included a second-round playoff appearance.

BHS will be playing in a new classification this fall, which also means a new region, 1 AAAAA.

The Georgia High School Association decided to eliminate the 7-A classification, which moved Brunswick High from 6-A to 5-A, still the second-highest classification.

There are nine teams in Brunswick's new region: Brunswick High, Bradwell Institute, Effingham, Evans, Glynn Academy, Greenbrier, Lakeside, South Effingham, and Statesboro.

"We're bringing back in Statesboro, and we're bringing back in Bradwell," Coach Grady said. "Grovetown is going out, but Greenbrier is coming in,

so we replaced one Augusta school with another."

The two non-region games will be against Camden and Wayne. Camden will travel to Brunswick to open the season on August 16, while Brunswick will travel 'Jesup' the road to Wayne the next week.

"We got a scrimmage against Ware, game 1 against Camden, and game 2 against Wayne," Coach Grady told me, "and then region games from there on out."

BHS will have a bye week following the Wayne game, and then, "We're starting out of the gate with a really tough region opponent in Effingham."

It's worth noting that BHS and Effingham have developed a pretty strong rivalry over the past few years, and it will be interesting to see how that game plays out September 6 when the Pirates travel to Rebel Field at Bob Griffith Stadium to take on the Rebels.

The Brunswick High-Glynn Academy City Championship game is slated for September 27 at Glynn County Stadium.

When I asked Coach Grady if Brunswick, Effingham, and Glynn would be the favorites in the region, he agreed.

"I think that's a fair assessment," he said. "When Brunswick, Glynn, and Effingham play each other, it's been for the 1, 2, or 3 seed."

I also asked Coach Grady about trying to replace players like "Touchdown" Terry Mitchell, River Creel, Devin Smith, and others that graduated.

"Instead of replacing those guys, we've got to develop other players," he said. "We have a lot of talent returning, plus some new faces that could make an immediate impact."

One returning talent is junior Heze Kent—All-everything from a year ago. "He's going to have a big year," Coach Grady predicted. "We can split him out wide, play him at tight end, or put him in the backfield."

"Plus, he's a leader in the locker room as well. His voice carries, and he echoes what the coaches say. That's what we want."

Another returning starter is quarterback Grant Moore, also a junior.

"He's definitely a voice on offense," Coach Grady said. "When tough times happen, he can get the guys to rally behind him. He works hard and always does the right thing. He's the type of leader you want."

Also returning for the Pirates are Jamarius Towns, Waseem Murray, Jashawn Towns, William Heck, Caleb Butler, Kregg Richardson, Jordan Hicks, Jeremiah Robbins, and others, all adding significant talent and leadership for BHS.

"All of the coaches have been working hard, too," Coach Grady lauded, praising their dedication.

Mitch Belker returns as Offensive Coordinator for the Pirates, while Thomas Tedder is back as Defensive Coordinator.

It says here the Pirates win the region and make a deep run in the playoffs.



GLYNN ACADEMY RED TERRORS



2024 PREVIEW

Terror-tory By Joe Delaney



It's July and its hot and sticky. The weather forecast says RAIN every afternoon.

Lazy summer days with afternoon thunderboomers. But for so many of us it's really time to start thinking about FOOTBALL. And today it's specifically GLYNN ACADEMY RED TERROR football.

The Red Terrors of Rocky Hidalgo had a very successful 2023 campaign. 8-3 with an ohhhhhh so close agonizing first round loss in the playoffs.

The Red Terrors picked a bad game to play mediocre football and it cost them in a one point first round loss. On the positive side was another city championship running Rocks record against the Brunswick Pirates to 7-3. But let's move on and look at 2024. As of today the Terrors are undefeated.

Defensively the 2024 squad should be good. While the number of returning starters may not be overwhelming. The fact is that this Terror team has a lot of juniors and seniors who have played a lot of minutes for the Red and White.

A few years ago as we came out of the pandemic, the Red Terrors were looking at maybe a dozen or so juniors and seniors on the team.

That has drastically changed in the past couple of years and the Terrors will have close to 50 juniors and seniors ready to play on Friday nights.

It's a big difference. Especially on defense where there are holes to fill. Quay Evans and Tay Green return on the D-line for the Terrors and Ty Chishom returns in the defensive backfield.

Several other of last year's contributors will step into starting roles this year. With the depth the Terrors have built recently, Coach Rock feels the defense will be very good.

I think that the key for Glynn will be having some linebackers step up and play big time. If that happens the Terrors could be dangerous.

They could be dangerous because the offense will be lethal.

On offense the Terrors return a great mix of players including 3 offensive linemen.

The games are won or lost in the trenches and this group of road graters should be good.

Add in Josh Baker at center and this group should be solid. They are definitely going to have some guys in the backfield that can take advantage of every crease or hole the Oline gives them.

Returning are TE Deuce Hidalgo, WR Sean Wallace, QB Jayden Ellis and RB Greg Peacock. That's 7 returning starters and a dozen or so with experience from last year. The Terrors will be fun to watch foshio!

And keep an eye out for Nico Nikomunoz. He's a young QB who can sling it. If he gets on the field and can

distribute the ball it will free up Ellis and Peacock to wreak havoc. Either way this offense has the potential to be VERY good.

Special teams are just that at Glynn and it's just a question of how good. Returning will be Tuck Tucker to do the punting, kickoffs and FGs. Any time the Red Terrors get in the red zone it should be at least 3 with Tuck.

And keep an eye out for up and coming Patrick Coyle. He would start for most teams in the region but will give Glynn a great backup.

The return teams should be emphasized by Rocky and the staff. They could be electric this time around! Peacock is being recruited by all the DI's. So, lets hope the Rock puts him back deep and lets the opposing teams kick it to him.

Glynn rolls into 2024 with several new coaches on staff including Steve Sigemund with the DB's and all important Weightroom. Matt Moore comes on board with the RB's. And Gage Sills heads up the QB's. Welcome to the Terrortory gentlemen!

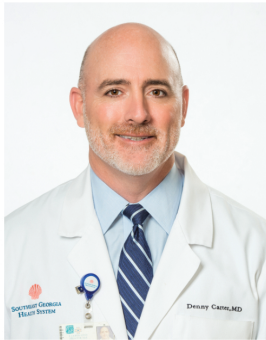
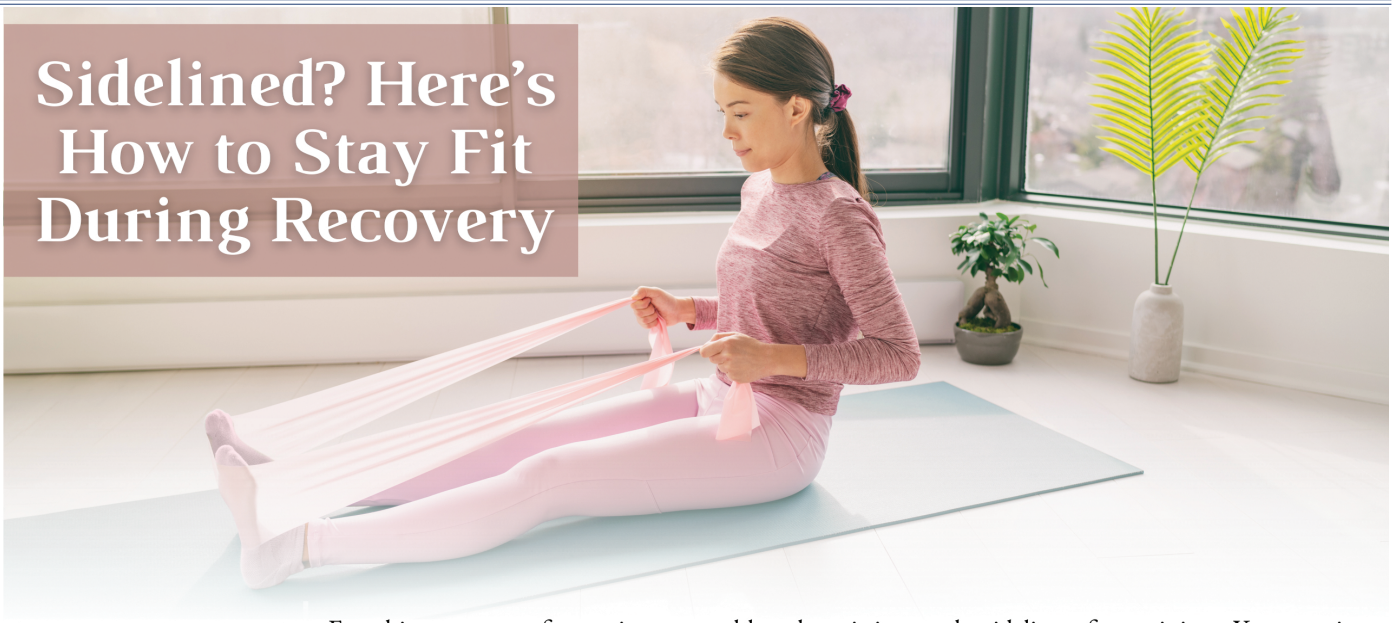
While I'm not going to break down the season game by game, the schedule is formidable.

Richmond Hill returns 18 starters and is in one of the fastest growing areas in the state. Ditto for the Rebels of Effingham. Evans will be loaded this year and Brunswick has talent.

Eight wins for Glynn Academy in the regular season again would be workable if things fall into place. Now let's see if they can make a playoff run.



Sidelined? Here's How to Stay Fit During Recovery



Denny A. Carter, MD

A board-certified orthopaedic surgeon, Dr. Carter specializes in sports medicine and has served as the team physician for the Brunswick High School Pirates since 2007.

Summit Sports Medicine & Orthopaedic Surgery has offices in Brunswick, St. Simons Island and St. Marys.

To make an appointment with Dr. Carter, call 912-466-7340.



Few things are more frustrating to an athlete than sitting on the sidelines after an injury. You were in peak physical fitness and now, you worry about losing muscle mass and strength. Denny Carter, MD, a board-certified orthopaedic surgeon with Summit Sports Medicine & Orthopaedic Surgery understands. “Your body requires rest to properly heal, but you need to stay physically and mentally strong,” Dr. Carter says. He also serves as chief of staff and medical director of Outpatient Rehabilitation at Southeast Georgia Health System on the Brunswick Campus.

So, yes, you can exercise, but you need to be smart about it. Your first step, according to Dr. Carter, is speaking to an orthopaedist or sports medicine physician about patient-specific recommendations. “Ask them what type of exercise they recommend and how often and how vigorously you should work out.”

Your doctor may prescribe physical rehabilitation. “Physical therapy teaches you to move your body correctly, which helps prevent additional injury. And exercise in general hastens healing by reducing inflammation, preventing scar tissue and promoting blood flow and circulation,” Dr. Carter explains.

Even if you can't tackle or score a touchdown right now, other doctor-approved physical activities will help maintain your strength, mobility, flexibility and overall fitness. Dr. Carter suggests asking your doctor which of the following activities are best suited to your situation:

- Swimming and working out in the pool
- Pedaling a stationary bike
- Stretches
- Balance exercises
- Walking
- Stair climbing
- Abdominal, lower back and chest exercises
- Using resistance bands
- Tai chi
- Yoga
- Pilates

“Even when you're benched, stay as active as possible, just stick to low impact exercise, do not overdo it and pay attention to your body's signals,” Dr. Carter says. Good nutrition also promotes healing. “You may not be working your body as hard physically, but it's still working hard to heal. Support that process by eating a well-balanced diet of healthy foods – fruits, vegetables, whole grains and lean protein.”

The road to recovery may contain detours, but you don't have to travel it alone. “Orthopaedists and sports medicine professionals are well versed in treatment modalities that aid recovery. If pain interferes with your ability to perform physical or occupational therapy or activities of daily living, we can discuss pain management. There are many options, including steroid injections, ultrasound therapy and prescription non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs. We can show you the best path forward, whether that means conservative therapies or minimally invasive surgery. We understand athletes and we want to get them back in the game as quickly and safely as possible,” says Dr. Carter.



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FREDERICA ACADEMY KNIGHTS



2024 PREVIEW

What's Next? By Jeff Doke



When Frederica Academy fell to the eventual State Champion Valwood Valiants in the semifinals last year, the mood was still celebratory.

Jordan Triplett had set numerous state records for both the season and his career. His high school football career, however, was over, and the question started to get asked. It's a question that Coach Brandon Derrick is used to hearing. "What is next year going to be like?"

"Well, we're going to be young, very, very young," Coach Derrick told me recently. "You know, I think that's our biggest thing is youth."

And as usual, he's not kidding. Heading into final preseason practices, the Frederica roster consists of four seniors, three juniors, 12 or 13 sophomores, and 8 or 9 freshmen.

For those of you scoring at home, that's a best-case scenario roster size of 29 players. Another season of being David to everyone else's Goliath seems to be on tap.

"Well, the way it's set up right now offensively, we're going to have to have multiple people," Coach Derrick explained.

"(QB/DB) Jaylin Baldwin's going to have to be a big-time player. He's got to make big plays. (WR/DB) Jayden Gibson's got to make big plays. He's got to be very productive, and he's worked on it. He's really worked on being a bigger part of the offense because he was just really focused on defense a lot last year as a freshman. So, he's focused this year on the offensive side of things."

One new face on the offense that should make some noise is rising Sophomore WR Jordyn Rollins, a transfer from Brunswick High.

According to Coach Derrick, "he's pretty athletic and could be a really, really good player. He's just got to get in there and get in the weight room and be physical and learn what we're doing."

Rounding out what Coach

Derrick refers to as the "4 Js" is 6'4" 200 lb freshman JC Wessel. The Coach explains that "he hasn't played football in a while, but he's a guy that could be a big-time player."

And then of course Hayes Carter. "He's played the sniper back and blocked for Jordan Triplett the last two or three years, but he's got to be able to run the ball some, and he's going to be moving to different spots on offense," Derrick says. "But we've got to keep him healthy, too, because he and Gavin Grantham are the two anchors on the defensive side, too. We've got to be very good at what we do."

Thankfully, one of the strong points of the '24 Frederica squad will be the lines. "Our biggest area that we have depth is the offensive and defensive line, which is helpful" according to Coach Derrick.

"That's where our most experience is going to be. We've got three of our seniors that are offensive and defensive line, and so, that's big for us. But, you know, those young kids have been working pretty hard. So, I feel pretty good about playing some of those sophomores in their offensive line right now as well. They've done a good job this off-season. The ones that have been here really have focused on what they need to do."

Coming into the final weeks of the offseason, the main person they'll be protecting is still up in the air.

"Right now, it's a three-dog race for QB – Jaylin (Baldwin), Davis Durkin, and Braxton Sykes."

On special teams, Mary Ford Fitzjurls should be returning if her national soccer team responsibilities don't overwhelm (they shouldn't), and A.J. Manning has been working on punting duties as well.

The schedule will be your typical Frederica buzzsaw lineup. The Knights will have scrimmages against Bethesda and Brantley. And then, Savannah High's going to come in and West Nassau's going to be big and athletic. Frederica also has Valwood, who's the state champ. Not to mention games against Pinewood and Bulloch Academy.

In short, expect more fun, Frederica style football from the boys (and girl) in green and grey.

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CAMDEN COUNTY WILDCATS



2024 PREVIEW

The Wildcat Way By Michael Spiers



Following the retirement of legendary Wildcats head coach Jeff Herron at the end of 2023 high school football season, which included a trip to the GHSA 7A semifinals last November and a career that included three state championships at Camden, the Wildcat Way is going to have a new look for 2024.

Enter new Camden head coach, Travis Roland.

After spending a little time with him, you begin to understand that he doesn't feel the need to fill the huge shoes left by his predecessor. Instead, the 2023 Florida High School Athletic Association 3S Coach of the Year is bringing his own pair of shoes to Kingsland.

Roland comes to Camden County after three years as the head man at Mainland High School in Daytona Beach, FL where his Buccaneers finished last season as the Florida 3S state champions after a dramatic come-from-behind victory against St. Augustine.

Daytona was home for Coach Roland and he finished his time at Mainland High School, which is also his alma mater, with a 30-10 record.

Prior to Mainland, he spent four years as the head coach at Flagler Palm Coast. His career record as head coach stands at an impressive 58-22.

Anyone who has followed Camden County football over the years knows that the Wildcats' signature has been as a power running team, mostly operating in the Wing-T. Coach Roland will begin to evolve that system by including more passing concepts and spread formations.

The Wildcats also have a new offensive coordinator in Grant Alford, who comes to Kingsland after spending eight years as an assistant coach at Florida's Lake Minneola High School.

Starting quarterback Parks Riendeau returns for his junior season and is looking to continue the momentum from last year's deep playoff run.

Riendeau is a tough-as-nails kid with all the leadership qualities you could ask for.

In addition to the QB, the Wildcats offense will undoubtedly benefit from the play of senior athlete, Elyiss Williams. The 6-foot-7, 235-pound tight end has a 5-star rating from most major recruiting services and has committed to play for Kirby Smart and the Georgia Bulldogs beginning in 2025.

Coach Roland is known as a defensive coach, and all signs point to him being the one to call plays on that side of the ball.

The Wildcats will be looking

to replace the entire defensive front as that group consisted of all seniors last season.

Big things will be expected this coming year from Jam and Jav, the Daley twins, who are rising seniors. Ja'maric Daley saw action last year at the safety position, while twin brother, Ja'varis Daley, contributed as a linebacker.

Xavier Brown should step in and fill the spot at inside linebacker for his junior year, but I expect this defense to be led by senior Wayne Austell who showed incredible improvement throughout the season last year as an outside linebacker.

The Wildcats finished last season with an overall record of 10-4, earning playoff victories against Newton, McEachern and Mill Creek before losing to Walton in the state class 7A semifinal.

After all of that, Camden will enter the 2024 season in a new classification. The Georgia High School Association has done away with class 7A in an effort to decrease the distances between schools in its highest classification for football, which will now be 6A.

In addition to Camden County, the new Region 1-6A will include Richmond Hill, Colquitt County, Lowndes, Valdosta, and the return of old region foe, Tift County.

The top four teams in the region will be eligible for the 2024 playoffs.



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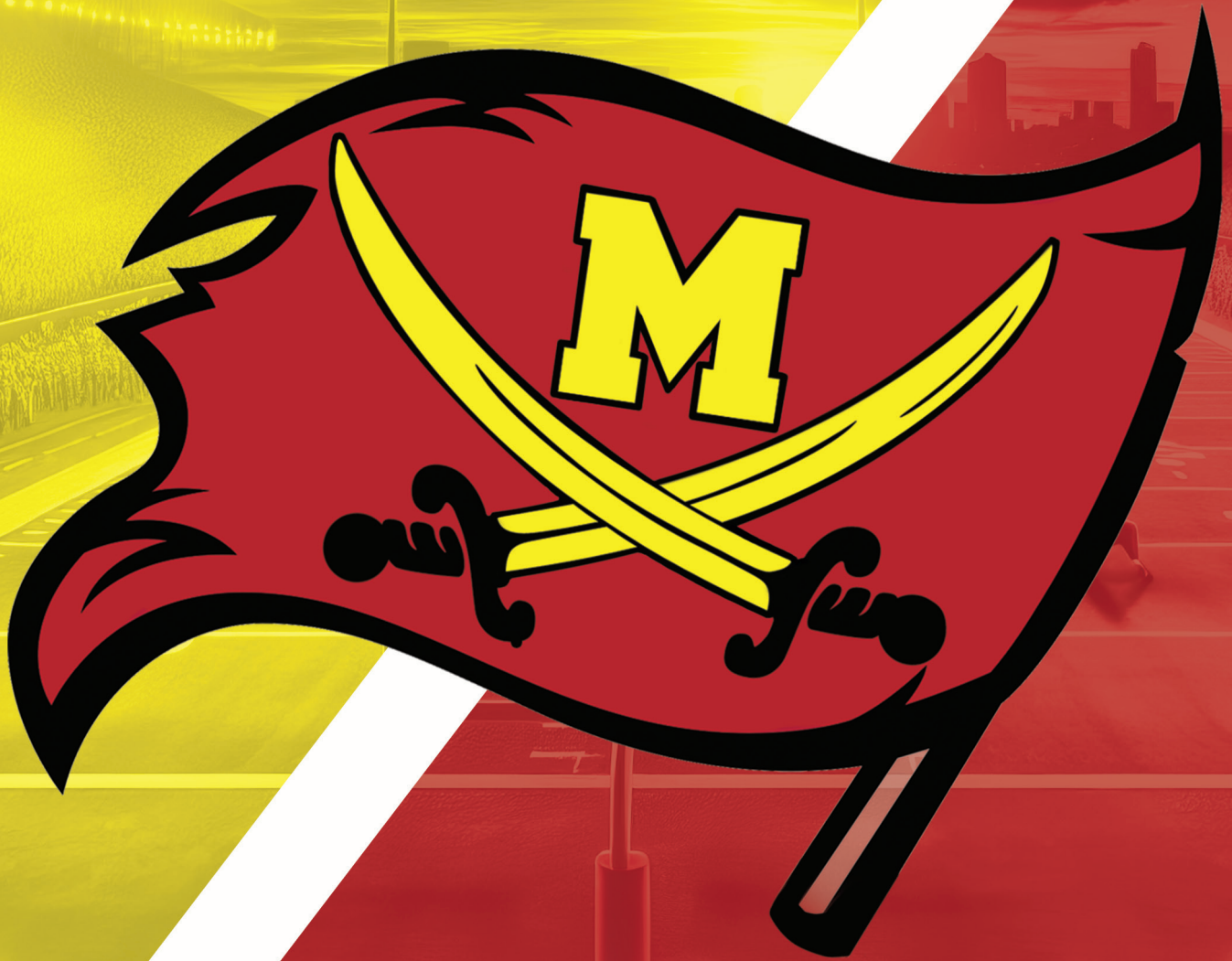
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**MCINTOSH COUNTY
ACADEMY**
BUCCANEERS



2024 PREVIEW

Buc-ing The Trend By Jason Bishop



There was a point, not too long ago, where the McIntosh Academy Buccaneers' football program was as unstable as it came. The Bucs football program suffered through 5 head football coaches in 7 years.

Then entered Bradley Warren. Warren has now been the head man in Darien entering his sixth season. During that stretch the Bucs have made the playoffs every year that Warren has been the coach for MCA.

This season's expectations are no different. Every year for the past several MCA has been talked about as being capable of making a deep run in the playoffs and even a dark horse for a state title.

Last season, it was a bit of an

underwhelming season, at least by the standards that now exist with the Bucs program. MCA went 4-6 in the regular season, including a 14-6 loss to 6A Glynn Academy and a loss to 5A Bradwell Institute. McIntosh County Academy also suffered a loss to rival Emanuel County Institute and took shut-out losses from Lanier, Jenkins County, and Portal.

Despite the tough losses, MCA still made the playoffs as a lower seed. However, just to add insult to a far less than stellar year, the Bucs were eliminated in the first round by Clinch County. It was the third time in four years that Clinch had eliminated the Bucs from the playoffs. Rough.

MCA was young in 2023 and 2024 promises to field a much more mature and older group. I actually think this team will be contending for a region title in 2024.

New regions were announced for the next seasons and MCA's region (Region 3A DII) will consist

of Bryan County, Claxton, ECI, Jenkins County, Metter, Portal and Savannah

Here is the schedule.

- August 16 - @ Islands
- August 23 - Charlton
- August 30 - Bye
- September 6 - @ ECI
- September 13 - Claxton
- September 20 - @ Screven
- September 27 - Bye
- October 4 - Jenkins County
- October 11 - @Bryan County
- October 18 - Metter
- October 25 - Savannah
- November 1 - @ Portal

Again, I think MCA will be very good and contend for a region title. It will be tough though. That region is stacked.

I think MCA will go 8-2 in the regular season.

Maybe the Bucs will see Clinch in the playoffs and shake that albatross on the way to a state title.



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BRANTLEY COUNTY HERONS



2024 PREVIEW

Swamp Birds By Jason Bishop



In three years I want you to remember that you read what I am about to say here. The Brantley County Herons are going to be competing for region titles by 2026.

In this last cycle of coaching hires the Brantley County school system made the biggest hire in the state, they hired David Shores as their head football coach.

Who is David Shores you ask?

ago they almost hired David Shores instead. That is how good of a coach he is.

Most importantly, Shores has gotten a commitment from the Brantley County school system to commit resources to the football program, something that has not been common in Nahunta, GA.

Brantley is a huge county filled with that talent. That talent often finds its way onto other rosters that are not in Brantley County....Ware, Pierce, Brunswick, Charlton, etc.

If Shores can keep his talent inside county lines you will see overnight success and improvement for the Heron program.

The Herons will play in a brand

record of 5-5 isnt terrible but the losses are very telling. Against the better teams (Pierce, Toombs, Appling) on their schedule the Herons were outscored 148-20.

The Herons travel to Folkston to take on Charlton to open the season on August 16.

Brantley will also travel to Pierce, Worth, Thomasville, and Bacon County.

The Herons will host Windsor Forest, Vidalia, Jeff Davis, Fitzgerald and Berrien.

Probably the most crucial game on the schedule is going to be the Jeff Davis game. I think the winner of that game will finish with the #4 seed and a playoff berth, where the



Glad you asked. Shores is the best coach that has flown under the radar over the last five years.

Shores has former head coaching experience in Alabama and has coached at nothing but elite programs since. These stops include Hoover, DC at Lowndes, DC at Camden and Special Teams Coordinator at Brunswick High.

As a matter of fact, when Camden hired Jeff Herron a few years

ago they almost hired David Shores instead. That is how good of a coach he is. new region this season that will consist of Berrien, Bacon County, Fitzgerald, Jeff Davis, Thomasville and Worth County. This is Region 1-A Division 1.

While I don't expect Brantley to be able to unseat Fitzgerald as the favorite in that region, I do think the playoffs are a reality for the 'Swamp Birds'.

Last season the Herons went 5-5 overall and 2-4 in region play. A

loser will have to look to 2025 for a playoff appearance.

In 2024 I will predict the Herons go 5-5 in 2024 and begin to build some special things in Nahunta.

By the way, former UGA QB Stetson Bennett is from Brantley but did not play for the Herons. Remember what I was saying about keeping talent inside county lines?



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PIERCE COUNTY BEARS



2024 PREVIEW

Killer Bears By Colin Lacy



Sports fans across the landscape will say that “nobody cares if you didn’t win the last game.”

Well, that’s exactly what Pierce County did in 2023 by winning the 2023 AA State Championship against Rockmart.

The shootout 48-45 victory for the Bears capped off the stretch of winning the final nine games of the 2023 season behind quarterback Caden McGatha who ran for 258 yards against Rockmart to bring the title back to Blackshear.

Now the Bears turn the page but will be reading from a very similar book with the majority of the production back from the State Title team.

This includes standout quarterback Caden McGatha who will be entering his senior year in 2024. McGatha accounted for eleven yards shy of 2,000 on the ground while also throwing for 1,950 yards.

McGatha was accountable for 51 of the 71 touchdowns scored by the Bears on the season with 23 coming through the air and 28 on the ground.

Running backs Marquez Leggett and Jah Evans are also back in the fold and look to be a key factor in the Pierce success again in 2024.

Leggett was the Bear’s second leading rusher with 482 yards and 5 rushing scores teaming up with Evans that recorded 304 yards and second best on the team with 6 rushing touchdowns.

The Bears also return the top two receivers in Joe Drew and Nigel Brown. Drew goes into his senior season after 663 yards receiving with 10 TDs.

Brown followed up with 372 yards last season with 5 scores.

Virtually the only impact player not returning on the offensive side from the 2023 championship team is Carson Sloan who hauled in seven receiving touchdowns in conjunction with 365 yards before graduating after the 2023 magical season.

The 2024 slate kicks off on August 24th with the lid lifter against Coosa Christian who make the trip to Blackshear from Gadsden, Alabama.

Brantley County, who was a region counterpart last year, will return the trip to Pierce after the Bears pummeled the Herons last year 56-6.

Wayne County, New Hampstead and Brooks County will follow before a renewal of a rivalry against Vidalia to round out the non-region slate.

Vidalia, who has dropped down

to single A in the GHSA reclassification, fell to the Bears to the tune of 35-7 when the two were region foes last year.

Because of the reshuffling of the GHSA classifications and regions the new Region 3 in AA Class is now only comprised of 5 teams with Cook, Crisp County, Tattnall County and Appling County in addition to Pierce with Tattnall, Appling and Pierce the only holdovers that have stayed since 2023.

Last season Pierce County defeated Tattnall County 31-0 to cap off the regular season in 2023.

2024 regular season will finish up with a highly anticipated rematch of Pierce and Appling County. Appling was the lone blemish on the 14-1 record of the Bears with the Pirates getting the best of Pierce 17-14 last September.

2024 looks incredibly bright for 6th year head coach Ryan Herring as the Bears look to continue the streak of already 13 straight years of playoff football in Blackshear.

Already two state titles on the resume of Ryan Herring at Pierce County, and the Bears look poised to continue the legacy that has been exhumed the last more than a decade.

The Bears have had a double figure wins in each of the last six years and look to replicate that on their way back to Atlanta for another trip to the GHSA mountain top.



RICHMOND HILL WILDCATS



2024 PREVIEW

Build The Hill By Charlie Moon



So...what does the Richmond Hill football team have in common with Ray's Boom Boom Room? Yeah, I get it. You're wondering what drug flew into my coffee this morning, but just stick with me.

If you don't know about Ray's Boom Boom Room, it comes from the classic comedy, "LIFE." Eddie Murphy, Martin Lawrence and several others are in prison for life during the Civil Rights era.

Murphy's character Ray, describes a fictitious place called Ray's Boom Boom Room. It's a Harlem jazz dinner club that has it all. Serving such a harsh sentence, The Boom Boom Room takes them to a dreamy place, which has it all.

....and....that's what the 2024 Richmond Hill football team has.

Having been the Cats' play-by-play voice for six years and knowing the program from Head Coach Matt Lezotte's tenure, I believe this is the best team the Cats will field.

Even better than the 2019 squad that was one play away from making it to a state title game? YES!

Now, will that equate to a similar run at a state title? Who knows?

A couple major differences abound. Then, there were 7 GHSA classifications. The Cats were in 6A and a much different region than the current. Now, GHSA only has 6 classifications (not including A-Div 1).

Plus, there's the elephant in the room, a region that I believe is the top-ranked public school region in the entire country. Region 6-AAAAAA includes Colquitt County, Valdosta, Camden County, Lowndes, Richmond Hill and Tift County. Tell me another region that has 36 state titles and 7 national titles; can't find one.

Lezotte says, "The level of talent we play week in and week out is second to none. I'm not sure if I've ever seen this, but Lezotte says, "Depending on the personnel we're running, we've got 26 returning starters."

Of those, the number that are receiving serious college interest is in the double digits.

So...back to The Boom Boom Room.

The offensive line are the servers, the guys roaming around serving food and drinks and usually not getting the big-time praise. They make the party go! Thomas "Zimbo" Zimbolatti and Cameron Jackson headline a group that boasts over 100 career starts.

Asked how this line compares to 2019, Lezotte says, "We're deeper - 8 guys

that play on Friday nights."

The skill players (RBs/WRs) are the live band. They're the ones everybody is watching with names in lights.

RBs are led by 2023 800-yd rusher Josh Troupe and 4-year starter, DB Caleb Easterling, who had 27 carries in 2023. But look for young and talented Amire Miller and DJ Porter to get significant carries. Sophomore Porter may be the youngest, but he may have the biggest upside.

Wideouts are led by 2-way star Brandon McDonald, one of the most heavily recruited defensive players in the area. All 18 2023 catches came in the last half of last season. But I call him SLASH, because he plays both ways.

The defense is akin to The Boom Boom Room security, always keeping everyone in check and going after the bad guys.

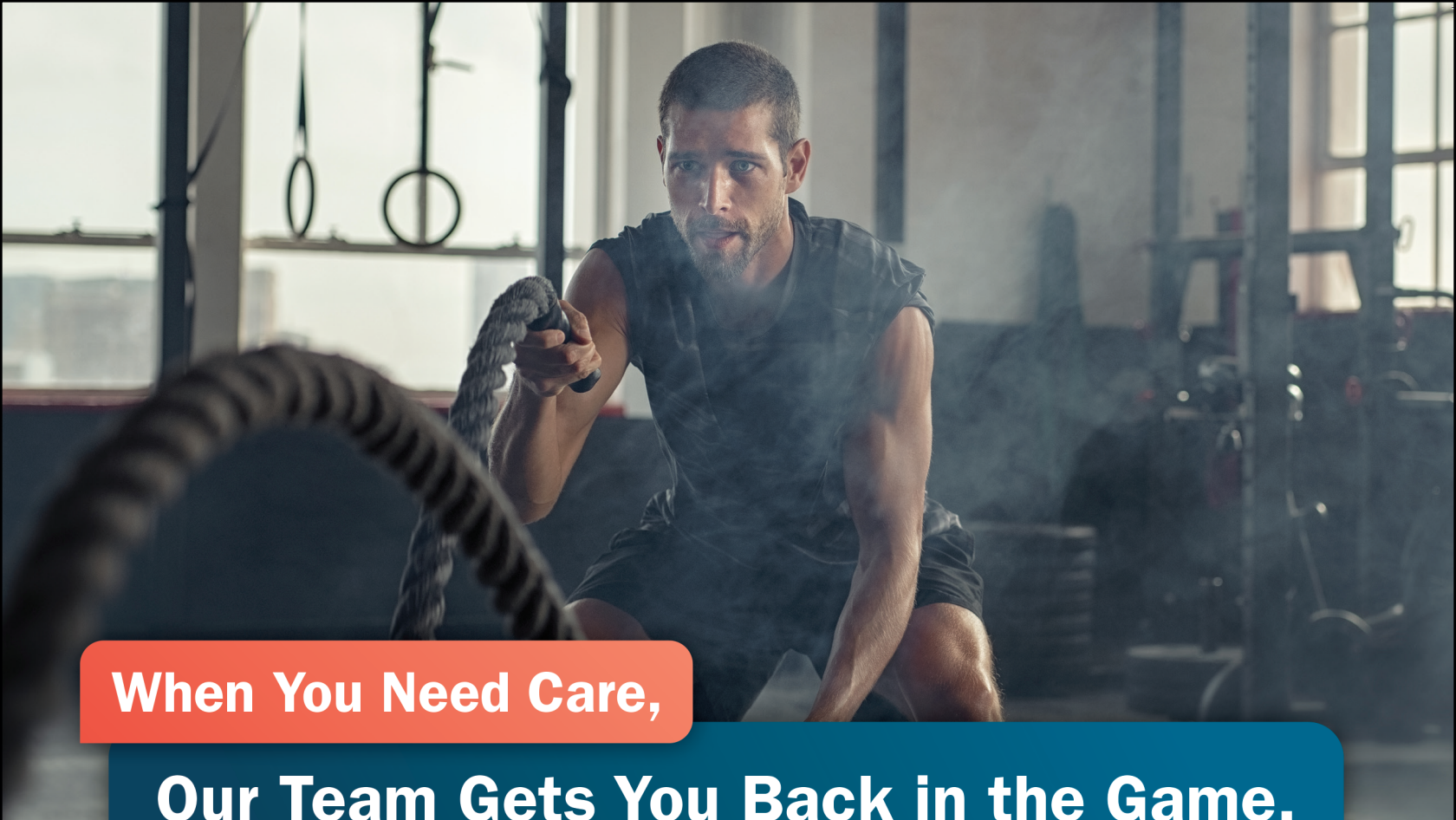
The LB core could also be one of the best in the Region. Gabe Bauman (114), Lee Johnson (74) and Aiden Grant (59) were the 2023 top 3 tacklers.

In his 2nd year as starting QB, Kirk Scott is the "Ray" of The Boom Boom Room. Ray is the orchestrator of everything in the room. He's got to be cerebral, direct traffic, and deliver on all the stars. Scott returns from 899 yards, and 8 TDs in 2023.

Make no mistake, this is the deepest and best roster that the Cats have probably boasted in the school's history.

As they always say in their parts, "Build the Hill."





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