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The magic of fall sports

in East Texas combines the community-wide investment in football, the competitive spirit of volleyball and the fierce performance of cross country runners. It is a perfect storm of sports that carries us out of the August heat, through the cool morning air of fall, to the doorstep of winter.

Whether it's a good hay season or not, fall sports reassure us. There is something wholesome about putting on a long-sleeved shirt to work outside, and being glad that you did. As the air begins to cool, the colors seem to have more definition, the day more meaning, as we

The Fall Campaign

an autumnal athletics guide by the Wood County Monitor **2019**

all count down to the next big local match-up.

The affinity of our communities for high school athletics is hard to define. Maybe it is a constant reminder for us all of when we were young and at the peak of our physical prowess. Maybe it is our understanding that team achievement is hard to come by in adult life, and we yearn for that team success in our lives.

While those reasons are logical, they are not the whole answer. The reason we have such a connection with our local sports is, in my

Alba-Golden • Mineola • Quitman • Yantis



opinion, joy. The sheer joy that watching and cheering and supporting young people we know is a most powerful emotion.

The happiness we feel when we can see the satisfaction on young athletes' faces and the emotional investment we make when we support them, is powerful stuff. It is akin to the emotions we generally reserve for only our families. And it is good.

**So, come on cool air...
let's get the fall sports rolling!**

-John Arbter



'Accountability' will be key for Panthers

By JOHN ARBTER

woodcystriinger@gmail.com

The Panthers of Alba-Golden are poised for what they hope will be an excellent season this fall.

Drew Webster has taken over as head coach after two years as offensive coordinator. The new watchword in the fieldhouse is accountability. "The kids have really bought in to our program," stated Webster. He noted the sense of pride his athletes have in how they play the game.

The Panthers will be running their Fly-T offense for the third year, and they expect great success in grinding down opposing defenses. With the large number of returning starters (10 of 11 on offense and 9 of 11 on defense), the Panthers expect to capitalize on that experience.

The one non-returning offensive starter is expected to be sophomore quarterback Blake Weissert. Webster noted how well his skills will fit into the offense and is anxious to watch him lead a veteran squad.

Webster's coaching lineage includes stints at James Bowie, Pittsburg, and Jefferson. A product of fine programs at Mount Pleasant High School, Webster attended Southern Arkansas State in Magnolia, Ark. on a baseball scholarship. While in Magnolia he met and subsequently married the other half of the coaching family, his wife Jamie, who is Alba-Golden's head volleyball coach.

Now entering his third year with the Panthers,



The 2019 Alba-Golden Panthers varsity football team

Webster knows his athletes and they know him. Expectations are high and the Panthers can make an impact in the wide-open District 10-3A.

Webster has several talented players returning this season who gained valuable experience as underclassmen last year. Speedy senior Jon Michael Chadwick has 4.6 speed and a solid 6-1, 180 pound frame to work with. Chadwick rushed for 813 yards on just 54 carries in nine games for over an 11 yard per carry average.

Junior Boedie Baker is the "between the tackles"

ball carrier who gains the tough yardage near the first down marker and the end zone. Baker rushed for 492 yards on 54 carries averaging over nine yards per carry. Fullback Austin Hartley is a solid running back and blocker along with being a top defender. Sophomore Ryan Jackson is a force on the offensive and defensive line while Jacob Dailey at 6-1 and 235 pounds opens

big holes to give the backs running room.

"It is a very well-coached district," Webster stated. He described the specific talents and strengths of each district competitor. Every bit of Webster's significant experience in East Texas football will be needed to overcome the challenges posed by traditional football powerhouses in the district.

As they open the season, Alba-Golden will be counting on their renewed sense of accountability and a system that seeks to break an opponent's will. Webster has empowered his charges to set team goals and to elevate performance through structured peer reviews.

Regarding what can be expected this season, Webster commented, "We will be retaining the 3-4 defensive

set, and we have the players to set the edge." He continued, "Our offense only has four base plays, but we will operate at a very high tempo. The system suits our players and we love it."

Panther stadium, with seating only on the west side, makes for a unique and entertaining venue on a Friday night. It will surely be the site of some classic battles this fall.

ALBA GOLDEN PANTHERS 2019 Varsity Football Schedule

Date	Opponent	Time	Location
Fri Aug 16	Tyler All-Saints (scrim)	6:00	Home
Thurs Aug 22	Kemp (scrim)	6:00	Away
Fri Aug 30	Hawkins	7:30	Away
Fri Sept 6	Big Sandy	7:30	Away
Fri Sept 13	Honey Grove (Homecoming)	7:30	Home
Fri Sept 20	OPEN		
Fri Sept 27	* HARMONY	7:30	Home
Fri Oct 4	* WINONA	7:30	Away
Fri Oct 11	* ARP	7:30	Home
Fri Oct 18	* GRAND SALINE	7:30	Away
Fri Oct 25	* TROUP	7:30	Home
Fri Nov 1	* QUITMAN	7:30	Away
Fri Nov 8	* FRANKSTON (Senior Night)	7:30	Home

Junior Varsity Schedule

Date	Opponent	Time	Location
Fri Aug 16	Tyler All-Saints (scrim)	5:00	Home
Thurs Aug 22	Kemp (scrim)	5:00	Away
Thurs Aug 29	Hawkins	5:00	Home
Thurs Sept 5	Big Sandy	5:00	Home
Thurs Sept 12	Honey Grove	7:00	Away
Thurs Sept 19	OPEN		
Thurs Sept 26	* HARMONY	7:00	Away
Thurs Oct 3	* WINONA	7:00	Home
Thurs Oct 10	* ARP	7:00	Away
Thurs Oct 17	* GRAND SALINE	7:00	Home
Thurs Oct 24	* TROUP	7:00	Away
Thurs Oct 31	* QUITMAN	7:00	Home
Thurs Nov 7	* FRANKSTON	7:00	Away

Lady Panthers volleyball roster

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------------------|
| 2 Kayli Covey | 12 Crimson Bryant |
| 3 Kalli Wright | 13 Cacie Lennon |
| 4 Bralee Littlejohn | 14 Kylie Kennedy |
| 5 Hope Wiley | 22 Madi Bryant |
| 6 Abby Hallman | 23 Autumn Whitten |
| 7 Laynie Culp | 24 Ann Marie Pendergrass |
| 9 Kaylee Anglin | |



The 2019 Alba-Golden Lady Panther varsity volleyball team

Lady Panthers look to bring 'heart and passion' to each match

By JOHN ARBTER

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"I'm expecting good things," said Alba-Golden Panther volleyball head coach Jamie Webster.

In her inaugural season with the Lady Panthers, Webster is excited at what the season holds. "This group of girls already have a great knowledge of the game and have been successful already," she commented.

Webster is transitioning from the Alba-Golden cross country coach to volleyball, replacing longtime volleyball coach TaShara Everett.

Everett will be taking over the reins of the Mineola high school volleyball team.

The new Lady Panther coach enthusiastically talks with high regard of the players returning to the squad and the underclassmen who will be joining this season.

"We are going to be just fine," Webster explained, "as long as we can bring the heart and the passion to each game."

As her husband, Alba-Golden head football coach Drew Webster, observed, it is heart and passion that set Jamie Webster apart as an athlete and com-

petitor.

She was a gifted athlete and attended college on a softball scholarship as a catcher. A native of Atlanta, Texas, she finished her collegiate career at Stephen F. Austin University and has been part of a coaching duo ever since.

Her passion for volleyball is evident.

"It's the perfect game and my favorite sport," she stated. "The game is exhausting but the winning of a point or a game or a match gives you a surge of energy." She described how the present version of the game, with the best of five game match-

es and rally scoring, has made fatigue management a huge challenge.

"If you aren't sweating, you aren't playing hard enough," stated Webster.

Alba-Golden is taking advantage of the new UIL rule allowing two hours per week of sport specific voluntary training during the summer. With the volleyball season starting the first week of August, the extra time is being put to good use.

Webster summed up her philosophy on the coming season: "We will give everything we have and have fun doing it."

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The 2019 Alba-Golden Panthers varsity cheerleaders



The 2019 Mineola Yellowjackets varsity cheerleaders

Panthers hoping to field full squads in cross country

By JOHN ARBTER
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"We are going to need a bigger bus."

This phrase is the 2019 motto for the Alba-Golden Panthers cross country team. Coming off a successful 2018 season, the harriers went on a recruiting push at Alba-Golden schools, and full boys and girls teams are expected to compete this fall.

Seven runners compose a full cross country team. Although meets have individual race winners, the

objective of cross country is to place your best five finishers ahead of your opponents' best five.

The typical course is five kilometers and runners at times must cross challenging terrain. The season features six meets, usually held on Saturdays, including the district meet.

Coach Corey Hass will be leading the Panthers this fall. The increased interest in cross country portends well for the Panthers to build on the successes of 2018.

Alba-Golden cross country schedule

Sep. 14 Grace Cougars Invitational-South Side Baptist Church
Sep. 21 Running Eagles Meet-First Monday Trade Days, Canton
Sep. 28 Gilmer Cross Country Meet
Oct. 12 District Meet @Mineola

Alba-Golden Lady Panthers 2019 Volleyball Schedule

Date	Opponent	Location	Time	Teams
Thurs & Sat Aug. 29 & 31	Wills Point Tourn.	Wills Point	TBD	JV
Thurs-Sat Aug. 29-31	Brownsboro Tourn.	Brownsboro	TBD	V
Tuesday Sept. 3	Winona	Winona	4:30	JV, V
Friday Sept. 6	Hawkins	Hawkins	4:30	V, JV
Tuesday Sept. 10	Open		4:30	JV, V
Friday Sept. 13	Edgewood *	Alba-Golden	4:00	V ONLY
Tuesday Sept. 17	Mineola *	Mineola	5:00	JV, V
Friday Sept. 20	Brownsboro	Alba-Golden	4:30	JV, V
Tuesday Sept. 24	Quitman *	Alba-Golden	5:00	JV, V
Friday Sept. 27	Lone Oak *	Alba-Golden	4:30	V, JV
Tuesday Oct. 1	Grand Saline *	Grand Saline	5:00	JV, V
Friday Oct. 4	Rains *	Rains	4:30	V, JV
Tuesday Oct. 8	Edgewood*	Edgewood	5:00	JV, V
Friday Oct. 11	Mineola *	Alba-Golden	4:30	V, JV
Tuesday Oct. 15	BYE			
Friday Oct. 18	Quitman *	Quitman	4:30	V, JV
Tuesday Oct. 22	Lone Oak *	Lone Oak	5:00	JV, V
Friday Oct. 25	Grand Saline*	Alba-Golden	4:30	V, JV
Tuesday Oct. 29	Rains**	Alba-Golden	5:00	JV, V

District * Senior Night **
Athletic Director: Drew Webster



The Mineola Lady Yellowjackets volleyball squad during recent tournament play.

2019 Mineola Cross Country Middle/High School Schedule

Date	Meet	Team	Location	Time
Sat Aug. 17	YellowJacket Twilight	HS Only	Longview, TX	TBA
Sat. Aug. 24	Tiger Invitational	HS Only	Commerce, TX	TBA
Fri. Aug. 30	Mineola Invitational	HS Only	Mineola, TX	TBA
Sat. Sept. 7	Red Raider XC Meet	MS/HS	UT Tyler Campus	TBA
Sat. Sept. 14	Hallsville XC Meet	MS Only	Hallsville, TX	TBA
Sat. Sept. 14	UTA Regionals Preview Meet	HS Only	Dallas, TX	TBA
Sat. Sept. 21	Run w/the Eagles	MS/HS	Canton, TX	TBA
Sat. Sept. 28	Buckeye Invitational	MS/HS	Gilmer, TX	TBA
Thurs. Oct. 3	Ken Gaston Invitational	HS Only	Grand Praire, TX	TBA
Sat. Oct. 12	District CC Meet	MS/HS	Mineola Middle School	TBA
Sat Oct. 19	4th Annual Pancake Breakfast	MS/HS	FBC Mineola	TBA
Mon. Oct. 28	Regionals-Lynn Creek Park	HS Only	Jesse Owens Memorial Complex	TBA
Sat. Nov. 9	State Meet	HS Only	Old Settler's Park	TBA

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The 2019 Mineola Yellowjackets varsity football team

Yellowjackets look to bring never-give-up attitude to new season

By JOHN ARBTER
woodcylinder@gmail.com

“Iron sharpens iron, and one man sharpens another” – Proverbs 27:17. Such will be the basis of the Mineola Yellowjackets fall football campaign. According to Mineola head coach Luke Blackwell, the verse accurately reflects the team’s efforts to challenge one another and improve every day.

With a wide open District 8-3A, the Yellowjackets will face a battle every week. Blackwell described Gladewater and Tatum as having plenty of returning starters from their outstanding teams a year ago. West Rusk, White Oak

and Winsboro are always tough challenges, while Sabine “is likely the most improved program in East Texas.”

Yellowjackets fans can expect to see the familiar one back set in 2019 “with a few new wrinkles,” said Blackwell. Just as in 2018, Mineola will fight to the very last whistle. Blackwell reflected on the physical and mental toughness featured in the 2018 squad, which was exemplified in the overtime victory at White Oak. He remarked, “There was every opportunity for the team to quit – away game, monsoon conditions, swamp-like field – but they did not. It was one of my proudest moments of the year.”

The team will need to call on that program defining win and more in 2019. Although Mineola lost only seven seniors from a year ago, the departures included three offensive line starters and standout quarterback Shaw Franklin. Blackwell acknowledged the gaps to be filled but described how each year athletes – some unforeseen – emerge as leaders. It is what makes high school football great.

Blackwell does have one of East Texas’ top running backs and defenders in junior Trevvion Sneed. Sneed is a bonafide Division I talent. Sneed, at 6-1, 210 pounds has been a starter since his freshman year. He

rushed for 1,613 yards on 219 carries which is an average of 7.4 yards per carry and 16 rushing touchdowns in 10 games last year. Sneed also had a great defensive year with 82 tackles (20 tackles for losses) and six quarterback sacks. Sophomore Montrell Williams will add to the ‘Jackets running game.

Another Yellowjacket who has drawn college scout attention is 6-3, 285 pound Jackson Anderson who plays on both sides of the pigskin. Joining Anderson in the trenches will be 260 pound Zane Bedford. Stellar defensive back and wide receiver Cole Castleberry also returns for Mineola as does sure-handed tight end

Wylie Franks who will be at linebacker on the defensive side of the ball.

The Yellowjackets will be tested early. Following scrimmages at Malakoff and Caddo Mills, Mineola opens Aug. 30 at Wills Point. They then travel to Canton on Sept. 6 and host Farmersville on Sept. 13. A matchup in Big Sandy on Sept. 20 finishes non-district play.

As Blackwell looked forward to the first August workouts, he reflected on the excitement surrounding the season.

“We want that thrill of getting going, to get to work and see what we have,” he stated. The real excitement, he explained, is to identify

those new leaders and the kids who will step up. “We will adapt and adjust our program based on the new team of young men.”

Challenges no doubt will abound in the 2019 gridiron season. There will also be constants: playing through the whistle, mental and physical toughness, and a commitment to become better young men. These are the constants of the Mineola football program.

If the ‘Jackets can survive rugged District 8-3A and a pre-season slate, which includes three Class 4A schools, and can stay away from injuries, they will be poised to make a deep play-off run.

Veteran coach ready to lead Lady Jackets volleyball squad

By JOHN ARBTER
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A familiar face will be leading the Lady Jackets this fall. After 13 seasons with the Alba-Golden Lady Panthers, Coach TaShara Everett has taken over the reins of Mineola volleyball.

“Energy, energy, energy,” the 1995 Mineola High School graduate says as she sums up her perspective on volleyball. She explained that the speed of the game has increased significantly since her playing days. Being able to control the match means being able to control the tempo. “You may not need to, but you must be able to outpace your opponent in order to control the tempo,” she explained.

A local legend in volleyball circles, Everett expects to emphasize excitement, positive energy and honesty within the program. She described a program full of young, athletic players. Over 20 athletes will return this year, with 10 returning to the varsity squad. Mineola will field varsity, junior varsity and ninth-grade teams. Many of Everett’s tech-



The 2019 Mineola Yellowjackets varsity volleyball team

niques can be traced to her two mentors: Brenda Davidson, her high school coach, and Elissia Burwell, one of Everett’s collegiate coaches.

“They taught me to be tough and to be on time,” Everett affirmed. She con-

tinues to benefit from the wisdom of others. “A great coach never stops learning,” she commented. Everett explained how she has learned much from former UT standout Destinee Hooker and Penn State volleyball coach Russ Rose.

The Lady Jackets will participate in the Van tournament, the Tyler invitational, and a new event for them at the East Texas Baptist University tourney in Marshall. The preps will be needed as the competition in District 12-3A remains steep. “You

have to bring your A-plus game every Tuesday and every Friday in this district,” she stated.

Reflecting on the game, Everett explained how all six players must work as a unit. It requires a lot of team-building. Everett de-

scribed some of the cooperative drills she uses to build team skills.

“We do cooperative and competitive drills,” she stated. That sense of team will be tested as the Jackets compete for volleyball dominance in 12-3A.

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2019 Lady Jackets Varsity Volleyball Roster

1. Josye Simms	8. Sabria Dean
2. Meghan Brewington	9. Cyndi Butler
3. Mylee Fischer	10. Brittany Pickle
4. Tahjae Black	12. Tiara Stephens
5. Kelsey Brewington	13. Kaitlyn Pickle
6. Jessiah Riley	14. Kaitlyn Burrell
7. Valerie Garcia	15. Alyssa Cannon

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The 2019 Mineola Yellowjackets marching band

MHS cross country teams look to build on last year's success



The 2019 Mineola Yellowjackets varsity cross country team

By JOHN ARBTER
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Mineola 2019 cross country team captains David Amador and Alyssa Lankford are poised to lead their respective teams to state in 2019.

The 2018 girls cross country team was the first in school history to have qualified for state.

Six of seven varsity runners are returning. The boys team put in a stellar showing at regionals, finishing second.

Mineola has long hosted the district meet at the end of the season, but this year the school will also host a Mineola Invitational on Aug. 30.

The state of cross country at Mineola is healthy. Fourth-year coach David Smith expects to have 30 athletes in the program from middle school through varsity.

"We don't have a cut at Mineola," he stated, "If you are willing to work, I will make you a runner."

A native of Atlanta, Texas, Smith is exactly where he wants to be.

"Running is my passion, and I am doing what I always wanted to do," he remarked. He explained the lure of cross country running as being a battle within oneself. As he put it, "Can you beat the person you see in the mirror?"

The enthusiasm, maturity and success of his cross country runners impresses him every day and has led to a number of team-building events throughout the season.

The highlight of this team-building will be the annual pancake breakfast, a tradition which started with Smith's father.

Based on the high expectations this season, the pancake breakfast will be just one of many team celebrations in 2019.

Mineola Lady Jacket 2019 Volleyball Schedule

DATE	OPPONENT	SITE	ORDER	TIME
August 27	Brookhill	Mineola	V,JV,9	5:00
August 30 & 31	ETBU/ Marshal Tourn.	Marshall		TBA
September 3	Tyler Grace	Mineola	9,JV,V	5:00
September 6	Canton	Canton	V,JV,9	4:30
September 7	Quitman Tournament	Quitman	9/JV	TBA
September 10	OPEN			
September 13	OPEN			
Sept. 17	Alba Golden	Mineola	9,JV, V	4:30
Sept. 20	Grand Saline	Grand Saline	V,JV,9	4:30
Sept. 24	Lone Oak	Mineola	9,JV,V	4:30
Sept. 27	Rains	Mineola	V,JV,9	4:00
October 1	Quitman	Quitman	9,JV, V	4:30
October 4	Edgewood	Edgewood	V,JV,9	4:30
October 8	BYE			
Oct. 11	Alba Golden	Alba Golden	V,JV,9	4:30
Oct. 15	Grand Saline	Mineola	9,JV, V	4:30
Oct. 18	Lone Oak	Lone Oak	V,JV,9	4:30
Oct. 22	Rains	Rains	9,JV,V	4:30
Oct. 25	Quitman	Mineola	V,JV,9	4:30
Oct. 29	Edgewood (senior night)	Mineola	9,JV,V	4:30

DISTRICT PLAY

Yellow Jacket Football

DATE	OPPONENT	SITE	TIME
Aug. 16	Malakoff	Away	TBA
Aug. 23	Caddo Mills	Away	TBA
Aug. 30	Wills Point	Away	7:30
Sept. 6	Canton	Away	7:30
Sept. 13	Farmersville*	Home	7:30
Sept. 20	Big Sandy	Away	7:30
Sept. 27	West Rusk	Home	7:30
Oct. 4	Bye		7:30
Oct. 11	Gladewater	Away	7:30
Oct. 18	White Oak	Home	7:30
Oct. 25	Sabine	Away	7:30
Nov. 1	Tatum**	Home	7:30
Nov. 8	Winnsboro	Away	7:30


Date	Opponent	Site	Time
Aug. 29	Wills Point	Home	6:00
Sept. 5	Canton	Home	6:00
Sept. 12	Farmersville	Away	6:00
Sept. 19	Big Sandy	Home	6:00
Sept. 26	West Rusk	Away	6:00
Oct. 3	Bye		6:00
Oct. 10	Gladewater	Home	6:00
Oct. 17	White Oak	Away	6:00
Oct. 24	Sabine	Home	6:00
Oct. 31	Tatum	Away	6:00
Nov. 7	Winnsboro	Home	6:00

VARSITY JUNIOR VARSITY



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**Wood County
 MONITOR**

Quitman Bulldogs' goal for 2019 season is playoffs

By JOHN ARBTER
woodcylinder@gmail.com

Step into the field house at Quitman High School and ask "What is the objective this year?" You will receive a quick answer. "Playoffs, pure and simple," replies third-year head coach Bryan Oakes.

Playoffs for the Bulldogs means finishing among the top four spots in District 10-3A. Although it may seem a bridge too far, it is not. Aside from the pre-season favorite Harmony Eagles, the district is wide open. Still, finishing among the top four teams is no doubt a tall order. After a bye, Quitman will face Arp, Grand Saline, Troup, Harmony, Frankston, Alba-Golden and Winona in consecutive weeks.

The Bulldogs have a host of returning lettermen, most of whom have played varsity since their sophomore season. The team has the benefit of three years in a set program with expectations and accountability. Most importantly, players are being honed to seek out challenges, commit to the required effort, and prevail.

"We need to do three things to make the playoffs this year: execute, commit, and have fun doing it," stated Oakes. He described a team on the brink of controlling its own destiny. Paraphrasing UT head coach Tom Herman, Oakes commented, "We are rapidly moving from a coach-led to a player-led football team."

The 2019 Bulldogs will feature a spread-formation running attack and a traditional 4-3 defense. What may well distinguish this year's squad is the acknowl-



The 2019 Quitman Bulldogs varsity football team

edgement that although demand for success is high, the investment made in the program will lead to success.

Last year's leading rusher and quarterback Trey Barry returns for his senior year as a Bulldog. Berry is backed up by starting wide receiver Ty Holland. Both young men also see starting playing time in the defensive secondary. Holland has developed a reputation as a hard-nose defender who demolish receivers and running backs who come in his territory. Elisio Turcois came on strong in the final part of the season after

being inserted in the backfield. Although not large in stature, Turcois packs a wallop from his linebacker slot on defense.

Barry had a highlight game in the season final, a close loss to Frankston. The speedy back rolled to over 330 rushing yards in that game alone and ended the season with over 1,100 rushing yards and 600 yards through the air. Hard-running Brian Morris joins a stable of solid running backs for Quitman.

Senior tackle Hunter Gilbreath also returns. The rugged lineman has been starting on varsity since his

sophomore year. He is just one of the three "Hunters" on the Quitman line. Hunter Batchelder and Hunter Huggins join Gilbreath along with junior Christian James and the line has shown early promise they will be able to open plenty of running lanes for Bulldog runners.

Rylie Flanagan, at wide receiver, has shown speed and a talent for getting behind defensive backs. Flanagan is also one of those two-way starters for the Bulldogs. Rugged Luke Pruden plays tough defense and is a gifted blocker on offense. Senior Dylan Coe

is one of Berry's receiving targets and is a top defender who had 65 tackles and three interceptions in 2018.

Oakes, who has a long coaching history in East and North Texas, brings his passion for the game of football every day. "I am passionate about this game for what it has done in my life and what it can do for the lives of these young kids," he stated. A native of Lone Oak, he left a successful building business to return to coaching. As he explains, "I wasn't changing people's lives."

With the guidance of his mentor, Coach Jeff Smith,

Oakes returned to football. "God leads you where you need to be," he explained. Oakes feels he is exactly where he needs to be as the 2019 campaign draws near.

He's here to teach football, build character, and restore pride in a program that's emerging from the doldrums. "What we do," he explained, "is bigger than football, it is building young men. We must forever be mindful of that huge responsibility."

Oakes hopes to be teaching the lessons associated with success to his Bulldog team this fall.

Lady Bulldogs primed for another run in state volleyball playoffs

By JOHN ARBTER
woodcylinder@gmail.com

The last six years of Quitman volleyball, under the leadership of head coach Ashlee Lingo, have yielded three district titles and five trips to the playoffs. "Everyone comes back to success," she explained when contemplating the program's record.

Lingo comes from a long line of teachers and coaches. The Quitman home games are played in the gymnasium honoring her late grandfather and community stalwart, Delbert Ballard. Teaching and coaching runs throughout the last three generations of her family.

Returning home after her

collegiate studies at TAMU, circumstances led to eventually coming to lead the Lady Bulldogs. "There are familial reasons that God brought me back to Quitman," she admitted.

Under her leadership the program has flourished. Quitman expects to field three full volleyball squads again this year: varsity, junior varsity and ninth-grade.

Lingo played on three Quitman volleyball teams that made it to the state tournament in 2003-2005. She brings a unique connection to bear when addressing the athletes, the program, the community and the school.

The 2019 squad will be



The 2019 Quitman Bulldogs varsity volleyball team

challenged early with participation in tournaments at Princeton, Wills Point and Tyler. The Tyler tourney has been a regular stop however the Princeton and

Wills Point tourneys were added this year to expand the competition.

The Lady Bulldogs will need all the early work they can get. The volleyball tal-

ent in district 12-3A is top-notch.

Volleyball powerhouse Rains and recent champion Edgewood may pop to mind, but Lingo explains

that each of the district schools is competitive, well-coached and hungry.

"I love volleyball because it is the truest of team sports," Lingo stated. She continued, "Once the five basic skills of volleyball are mastered, the possibilities within the game are endless."

Returning five seniors and stand-out Ava Burroughs, the Lady Bulldogs will be primed for a 2019 playoff run.

Quitman Lady Bulldogs Volleyball Roster

- 1 Brooklyn Marcee
- 2 Jentri Jackson
- 3 Julia Simpkins
- 4 Alexis O'Neal
- 5 Carley Spears
- 6 Savannah Breeding
- 7 Shelby Hayes
- 10 Lexie Wilson
- 12 Maddy Whitehurst
- 13 Lucy Brannon
- 14 Ava Burroughs
- 15 Halie Davis



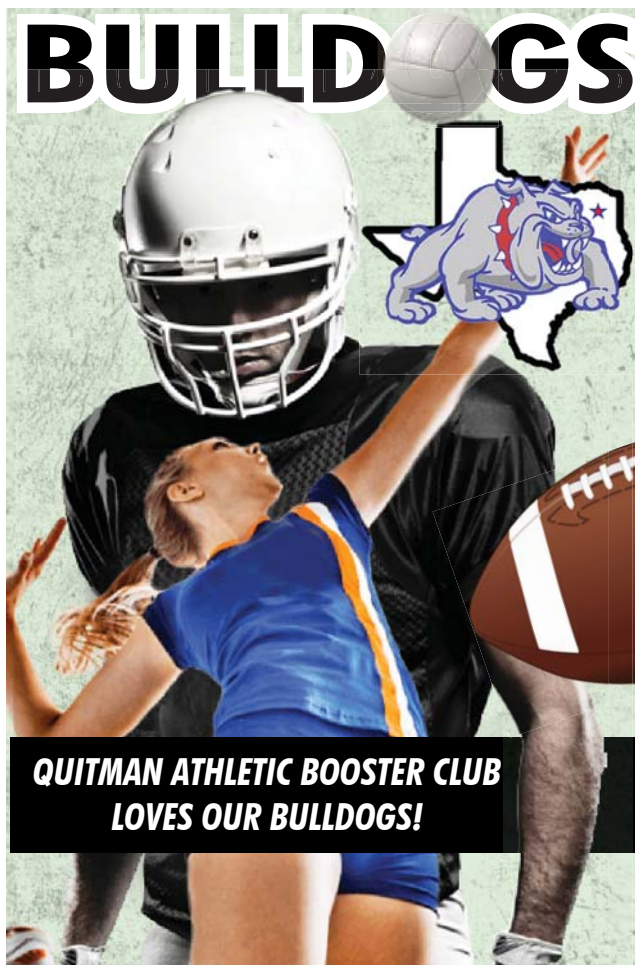
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Quitman cross-country runners plan to improve on success of last season

By JOHN ARBTER
woodctystringer@gmail.com

The Quitman Bulldogs cross country teams will be looking to exceed the fine accomplishments of last season. The boys secured the district championship, while the girls missed out of regional competition by the narrowest of margins.

The boys cross country team finished 9th out of 24 teams at the regional meet in 2018. With all but one of their runners returning in 2019, the Bulldogs have high expectations for the season.

Coaches Jim Reid and Michael Scott, now in their 3rd and 4th years respectively, lead the boys and girls squads. Both leaders are impressed by the characteristics of their athletes. "One of the most impres-



The 2019 Quitman Bulldogs varsity boys cross country team

sive things about these young athletes is the level of competitiveness they possess," explained Reid. Scott agreed, "To be successful in cross country, the kids must have ambition at heart."

The number of multi-sport athletes competing for Quitman indicates a thriving environment of competitiveness and ambition.

"Our numbers are up and we are truly excited

about what the year will hold," stated Scott. A half dozen meets will prepare the teams for the Saturday, October 12 district meet in Mineola.

With the practice season

that opened Aug. 5 and daily work-outs often commencing at 6:30 a.m., Reid explained how the program seeks to develop the young athletes to peak performance by mid-October.

Cross country is special, Reid summarized. "When you line up 100+ runners to start a race, it becomes a team sport of individual, psychological battles."



The 2019 Quitman Bulldogs varsity cheerleaders

Quitman Bulldogs Cross Country Schedule

Aug. 24	@ Union Grove
Aug. 30	@ Mineola
Sep. 7	Boys @ Tyler Lee
Sep. 14	Girls @ Jesse Owens Complex, Dallas
Sep. 19	Quitman Invitational
Oct. 3	Boys @ Lindale
Oct. 4	Girls @ Saltillo
Oct. 12	District Meet @ Mineola
Oct. 28	Regionals @ Jesse Owens Complex, Dallas
Nov. 9	State Meet @ Round Rock

Quitman Varsity Football Schedule

Aug. 30	Cumby at Quitman	7:30 p.m.
Sept. 6	Quitman at Scurry Rosser	7:30 p.m.
Sept. 13	Union Grover at Quitman	7:30 p.m.
Sept. 27	Arp at Quitman (homecoming)	7:30 p.m.
Oct. 4	Quitman at Grand Saline	7:30 p.m.
Oct. 11	Troup at Quitman	7:30 p.m.
Oct. 18	Harmony at Quitman	7:30 p.m.
Oct. 25	Quitman at Frankston	7:30 p.m.
Nov. 1	Alba-Golden at Quitman*	7:30 p.m.
Nov. 8	Quitman at Winona	7:30 p.m.

* (Senior Night)

Quitman Volleyball schedule

Aug. 30	Quitman at Beckville	4:30 p.m.
Sept. 3	Van at Quitman	4:30 p.m.
Sept. 6	Quitman at Lindale	4:30 p.m.
Sept. 7	Pat Neighbors Tournament at Quitman	
Sept. 10	Quitman at Paris	4:30 p.m.
Sept. 13	Lone Oak at Quitman	4:30 p.m.
Sept. 14	Spring Hill Tournament	4:30 p.m.
Sept. 17	Grand Saline at Quitman	4:30 p.m.
Sept. 20	Quitman at Rains	4:30 p.m.
Sept. 24	Quitman at Alba-Golden	4:30 p.m.
Sept. 28	Quitman at Edgewood	11 a.m.
Oct. 1	Mineola at Quitman	4:30 p.m.
Oct. 8	Quitman at Lone Oak	4:30 p.m.
Oct. 11	Quitman at Grand Saline	4:30 p.m.
Oct. 15	Rains at Quitman	4:30 p.m.
Oct. 18	Alba-Golden at Quitman	4:30 p.m.
Oct. 22	Edgewood at Quitman*	4:30 p.m.
Oct. 25	Quitman at Mineola	4:30 p.m.

* (Senior Night)



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The 2019 Quitman Bulldogs marching band



Yantis Lady Owls varsity volleyball team

Yantis Volleyball Schedule

Aug. 30	Detroit at Detroit	4:30 p.m.
Sept. 3	Open	
Sept. 6	Rivercrest at Yantis	4:30 p.m.
Sept. 13	at North Hopkins	5 p.m.
Sept. 17	Como-Pickton at Yantis	5 p.m.
Sept. 20	Boles at Yantis	5 p.m.
Sept. 24	Cumby at Yantis	5 p.m.
Sept. 27	North Hopkins at Yantis	5 p.m.
Oct. 1	at Como-Pickton	5 p.m.
Oct. 4	Boles at Boles	5 p.m.
Oct. 8	Cumby at Cumby	5 p.m.
Oct. 11	Fruitvale at Fruitvale	5 p.m.
Oct. 15	Bye	
Oct. 18	Miller Grove at Yantis	5 p.m.
Oct. 22	Fruitvale at Yantis*	5 p.m.
Oct. 25	Bye	
Oct. 29	Miller Grove at Miller Grove	5 p.m.

*(Senior Night)

Yantis Cross Country Schedule

Yantis Owls Cross Country 2019

Date	Location	Time	Teams
Thur., Aug. 29	Avery	3:30	JH, HS
Thur., Sept 5	North Hopkins	3:00	JH, HS
Thur., Sept. 12	Miller Grove	3:00	JH, HS
Thur., Sept. 19	Quitman	9:00	HS
Thur., Sept. 27	Jacksonville	8:30	HS
Thur., Oct. 3	Lake Bob Sandlin	3:30	JH, HS
Wed., Oct. 9	District Miller Grove	3:00	JH, HS
Mon., Oct. 21	Region-Grand Prairie	TBD	HS

Yantis offers young athletes plenty of opportunity

By JOHN ARBTER
woodctystringer@gmail.com

There is no better place to be a young athlete than at Yantis High School this fall. The 2019 departing senior class left ample opportunity for youngsters in both the volleyball and cross country programs to gain valuable experience and make their mark on varsity squads.

Mike McMinn, Yantis's athletic director and sixth-year cross country coach, expects a high level of competition among the athletes this season.

Balancing the demands of

the student-athletes in a 1A school and developing the athletic skills of the maturing young adults requires attention and focus.

"It may be a rebuilding year in our programs," he stated, "but we have hard-working kids and that makes a difference."

The Owls cross country team will be without their state champion runner, Maddie Hooker, who will attend West Texas A&M this fall on an athletic scholarship. McMinn is ready to get the

season started and find out who will compete to

lead the team.

The Lady Owls volleyball squad will be led by first-year head coach Madison Gillean.

A native of Winnsboro, Gillean brings a wealth of athletic experience to the job. She competed collegiately at Blue Mountain College for four years as a standout on the Toppers softball team. Still, she said volleyball has always been her most enjoyable sport.

Gillean brings an appreciation for the complexities of the game and a hunger to teach the tactics to her charges.

"We intend to be the hardest working team on the court, and all the while being 100 percent supportive of our teammates," she commented.

The Lady Owls will compete in District 18 against the area schools of Como-Pickton, Cumby, Fruitvale, Miller Grove, North Hopkins and Quinlan Boles.

The Yantis cross country team will see action in meets at Avery, Saltillo, Quitman and North Hopkins, with the regional meet being staged in Grand Prairie.

Yantis Lady Owls Varsity Volleyball Roster

- | | |
|-------------------|------------------------|
| 1 Macie Starrett | 7 Brianna Swaim |
| 2 Kinley Hurley | 10 Mackenzie Francisco |
| 3 Emily Worley | 13 Brooke Barrett |
| 4 Yesenia Macias | 14 Macie Rodriguez |
| 5 Victoria Macias | |

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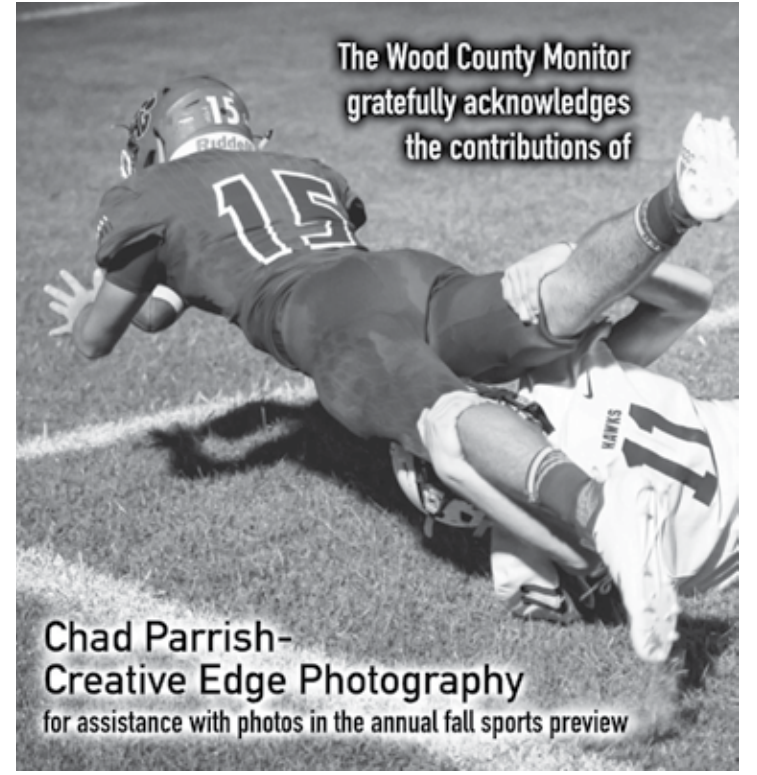
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The 2019 Quitman Bulldogs flag corps



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The Quitman Lady Bulldogs celebrate a point in recent tournament play.

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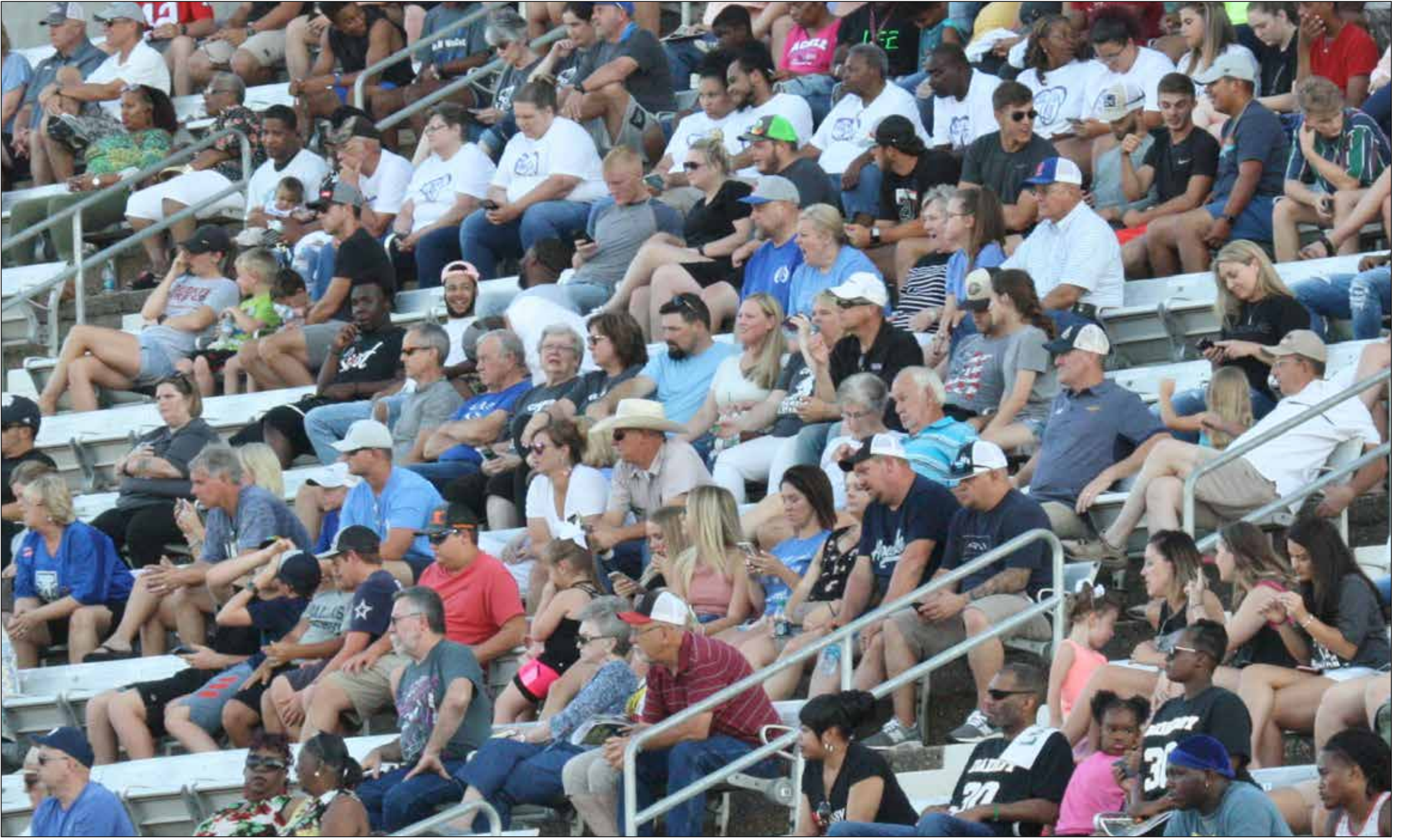
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No doubt, fall sports are special. Whether it is the community involvement in high school football, the teamwork of a volleyball side struggling to secure the point, or the sacrifices of lone cross country runners to protect the team standing, fall sports offer us life lessons aplenty. They also signal the turning of the seasons and mark the years with memorable events which will only sharpen in our memories. To the athletes ... we all envy the joys, and know the challenges, you will face. To all those who support our local athletic programs...thank you. Little of consequence would emerge from the sporting events if not for the work of coaches, parents, and the community at large. The secret to scholastic sporting events is widely known: those who support the programs are rewarded many-fold through the achievements of our young athletes.

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